



WELL

Equity Rating

WELL EQUITY RATING, Q2 2025

INTRODUCTION

A Roadmap for Promoting Engagement and Belonging

Organizations succeed when their people thrive and everyone feels empowered.

In 2021, companies saw record numbers of resignations attributed to employees demanding better workplace conditions and work-life balance policies. Global studies show that employees in inclusive workplaces are more likely to enjoy their jobs, work harder, innovate more and ultimately stay with their employers longer.^{1–4} Organizations that employ people with varied backgrounds, perspectives and experiences have also been found to be nearly a third more productive and 21% more profitable than their peers.^{4,5} Now more than ever, society and businesses around the world are looking for a tangible path forward to help them create places where everyone feels welcome, seen and heard.

The WELL Equity Rating helps address persistent gaps in health outcomes; barriers to health resources and healthcare accessibility, quality and affordability; and the role of varying life circumstances and needs impacting health outcomes. It gives organizations an actionable framework to improve access to health and well-being, prioritize inclusivity and promote engagement and belonging. The WELL Equity seal is a visible indication that an organization is committed to creating places where everyone has an opportunity to thrive. Enterprises that pursue the rating as part of WELL at scale are also eligible to receive organization-wide metrics to benchmark performance and track progress against industry peers over time.

Program Details

The WELL Equity Rating contains more than 40 features spanning six action areas, plus Innovation. These action areas include:

- User Experience and Feedback
- Responsible Hiring and Labor Practices
- Inclusive Design
- Health Benefits and Services
- Supportive Programs and Spaces
- Community Engagement

Projects must achieve at least 21 points to be awarded the WELL Equity Rating. Unless otherwise indicated, each feature is worth one point. To maintain the rating, projects undergo an annual renewal process to confirm their policies, programs and/or designs continue to meet the feature requirements.

For program details regarding WELL Core applicability, space types, occupant types and the WELL project boundary, please refer to the [Overview of the WELL Building Standard](#) (WELL Standard).

Developing the WELL Equity Rating

The International WELL Building Institute (IWBI) is the leading authority for transforming health and well-being in buildings, organizations and communities. IWBI's mission is to lead the global movement for putting people first in organizational decision-making and culture. IWBI sets the global standard for health through the WELL Standard, a library of holistic, evidence-based strategies that, when implemented, can improve the health and well-being of people. Developed over 10 years and backed by the latest scientific research, the WELL Standard contains over 100 features that contain more than 500 strategies, all organized into 10 categories called concepts. The WELL program (WELL) reflects the application of the WELL Standard; IWBI allows organizations to implement the WELL Standard in a flexible and customizable way to meet specific health and well-being goals and drive outcomes for their businesses.

WELL achievements are earned through the successful implementation of WELL features. WELL Certification is the highest pinnacle of achievement for strategies across all 10 concepts within the WELL Standard. WELL Ratings are achievements earned on a themed subset of strategies from within the WELL Standard. Starting in 2021, IWBI began developing the WELL Equity Rating alongside its Health Equity Advisory, which included 158 advisors, including 44 co-chairs from 26 countries from varying stages in life and career.

The WELL Equity Rating was developed through a design-thinking approach, which is a non-linear path to problem solving through collaboration, inclusive of people and communities who are not commonly consulted or considered. Decades of scientific literature including industry, public health and built environment research laid the groundwork to the structure, format and content of the rating. To develop the rating, in addition to reviewing volumes of research and scores of studies, IWBI engaged with organizational leaders, practitioners and members of the community. Engagements included co-chair interviews, stakeholder roundtables, surveys for both employers and employees, webcasts and a community forum for asynchronous discussion. IWBI also solicited select feedback from and worked with individuals with underrepresented backgrounds of all ages to understand their priorities.

The strategies in the WELL Equity Rating are drawn from those in the WELL Standard and have been selected to help you identify the approach that will matter most to your workforce, based on your organizational composition, demographics and goals.

This process identified specific groups of people who disproportionately suffer from disparities, lower life expectancies and worse health outcomes. It also helped identify new research showing how certain strategies and interventions from the WELL Standard lead to improved health outcomes for specific populations.

IWBI, in coordination with its advisors, selected strategies that:

- Improve access to an organization or physical space
- Enhance day-to-day inclusion and representation
- Foster workforce engagement and belonging

Implementing the WELL Equity Rating

The WELL Equity Rating makes it easier for organizations to target the strategies that will matter most to their workforce, based on their organizational composition, demographics and goals. To have the greatest positive impact, organizations first identify the population(s) they serve and work collaboratively with those communities to understand and accommodate their needs.

Specifically, after completing the demographic assessment required in EE01: Create Workforce Assessment, Engagement and Belonging Plan, organizations can use the population filters in their scorecard to identify the specific strategies that will support the groups that are represented in their workforce.

To-date, the populations that have been included in our research review include people who are neurodivergent, people who are physically disabled, LGBTQ+ individuals, primary caregivers, women and girls, and people who have been historically racially and/or ethnically minoritized. Additional populations will be added to this list over time.

Recommendations for implementation

- To inform your feature selection and overall approach, conduct an assessment that identifies areas for greatest potential impact, including people, policies and locations. Consider pursuing feature EE1: Create Workforce Assessment, Engagement and Belonging Plan to guide the process.
- Once you set your goals, link them with your business objectives and organizational processes. Update your goals on a regular basis; creating a workplace where everyone

can thrive is an iterative process.

- Support transformational success by holding managers and leaders accountable for meeting their goals. Achieving an inclusive organization requires a collaborative effort.
- Use a combination of top-down and bottom-up approaches; secure buy-in from executive leaders and members of the board of directors, as appropriate. For the greatest impact, organizational leaders should champion the goals and action areas within and outside the organization.
- Lead with empathy and authenticity and provide continual encouragement and training where possible.

The WELL Equity Rating provides an accessible entry point for both single locations and for organizations with multiple locations. The WELL Equity Rating is also a tool that can improve an organization's Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG), Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and/or social impact outcomes. As a third-party verified process, participation in the WELL Equity Rating communicates that the organization is accountable and taking meaningful action.

Definitions and Criteria

In collaboration with expert partners and stakeholders, the following definitions grounded the development of the WELL Equity Rating and the development of new strategies within the WELL Standard:

- **Health Equity:** Health equity means that everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible.⁶ Achieving this state requires the removal of obstacles to health (such as poverty and discrimination) and their consequences (including powerlessness, as well as the lack of access to good jobs with fair pay, quality education, optimal housing, safe environments and good health care).⁶
- **Equity:** Equity recognizes that each person has different circumstances and, accordingly, allocates individualized resources and opportunities to reach an equal outcome.⁷
- **Well-being:** Well-being is a state of balance or alignment in body, mind and spirit; it is feeling content and connected to purpose, people and community.⁸ Well-being cannot be fully realized without considering one's identity, values, traditions and beliefs.
- **LGBTQ+ individuals:** An acronym for people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer or questioning. This term is meant to be inclusive of any sexual orientation or gender identity.¹¹
- **People Who Have Been Historically Racially and/or Ethnically Minoritized:** Those who are not considered as part of a dominant race, ethnicity or caste (e.g., Black, Brown, Indigenous or First Nation, Dalits, first-generation immigrants), resulting in systemic, structural and institutional discrimination.⁶⁵¹
- **People Who Are Neurodivergent:** A person whose neurocognitive functioning diverges from dominant societal norms.¹³
- **People Who Are Physically Disabled:** A person who is impaired or limited by a physical or developmental condition.¹⁴
- **Primary Caregivers:** A person fulfilling primary responsibilities to care for a person who needs ongoing support such as a child, spouse, domestic partner, parent, parent-in-law, grandparent, grandchild or sibling.¹⁵
- **Women and Girls:** A person who identifies as female.

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USER EXPERIENCE AND FEEDBACK (EE)

The User Experience and Feedback action area promotes strategies that help organizations understand the needs of their stakeholders and create plans to support action and accountability.

Within every built space there exists a unique community of people with varied backgrounds who are linked by social ties, have common perspectives, engage in joint action and share experiences.¹⁶ Organizations that do not consult representatives from across their workforce during planning and development processes often fail to serve all stakeholder needs and may even negatively impact the health and well-being of certain populations.^{17,18} Engaging representative stakeholders from varied backgrounds from the onset creates the opportunity for collaborative dialogue among the key decisionmakers, planners and individuals who are likely to be impacted by the project. To better support all people who may be impacted, organizations should begin by conducting a comprehensive evaluation of workforce demographics and establishing comprehensive policies that address workforce engagement and belonging. Additionally, identifying and assessing employee sources of stress for employees within an organization through quantitative and/or qualitative measures can help organizations create a plan to relieve or modify those sources of stress and create a more supportive, healthier environment.

Employees are more likely to stay with their company longer when they feel valued and believe their voices are being heard.¹⁹ Collecting stakeholder input can help an organization identify and address its essential goals for health promotion and incorporate a design that celebrates the organization or location's unique identity, meets the needs of all stakeholders and enriches the well-being of both regular occupants and visitors.^{17,20,21} Without first asking for input, it is difficult to gauge which design, policy and programmatic approaches will most benefit the health and well-being of individuals who will utilize the space.^{22,23}

Surveys are an established tool for understanding and evaluating people's perceptions of indoor environmental conditions and wellness policies, as well as their impact on personal health and well-being.²⁴⁻²⁶ Utilizing surveys that incorporate a range of topics provides a data-driven, comprehensive picture of which interventions impact satisfaction.²⁷⁻³⁰ Annual surveys are particularly effective, as decisionmakers can use the results to prioritize health- and productivity-promoting interventions, and then assess their impact in surveys administered the following years.³¹ Qualitative approaches, such as interviews and focus groups, help organizations collect additional in-depth information that may not be captured through surveys.³² Drawing on employee feedback through a range of methods allows organizations to better understand and invest in the employee experience. These investment can help foster a healthier and more supportive work environment, while contributing to reduced absenteeism and turnover and supporting productivity, engagement and retention.^{19,33}

EE01 CREATE WORKFORCE ASSESSMENT, ENGAGEMENT AND BELONGING PLAN | O (MAX: 1 PT)

Intent: Promote employee engagement and belonging through an assessment of workforce demographics and the creation of an action plan to help all employees feel accepted, valued and included.

Summary: This WELL feature requires projects to evaluate their workforce demographics and develop an engagement and belonging action plan that includes goal setting and annual progress tracking.

Issue: Global companies in the top quartile for racial and ethnic diversity or gender diversity in executive leadership are 36% or 25% more likely to have financial returns above their national industry medians, respectively.⁶⁵³ Beyond executive leadership, every 1% rise in ethnic or gender diversity in the U.S. workforce corresponds to a 9% and 3% rise in sales revenue, respectively.³⁵ Despite these performance benefits for organizations, some populations still face barriers to career advancement. There is a lack of representation at the executive level worldwide, with women typically representing 21% or less and ethnic minorities representing 16% or less of these high-ranking positions.⁵ In the United Kingdom, women's compensation is about 13% less than men's⁶⁵² and 35% of LGBTQ+ employees hide that they are LGBTQ+ at work in fear of discrimination.³⁹ Further, in industrialized countries, 50-70% of people with disabilities of working age are unemployed.³⁸

Solutions: The benefits of representation on boards and within executive leadership are clear: companies that have more backgrounds represented in their workforce outperform their peers on multiple financial metrics, experience stronger creativity and innovation, and attract and retain better talent.³⁵ Further, when workforce representation and employee's sense of inclusion are both high, the financial performance outcomes are even stronger than when only one of these factors is high.³⁵ Workforce representation accounts for multiple demographic factors including gender, age, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, disability, and more.³⁷ Completing a comprehensive evaluation of organizational demographics is a critical initial step to understanding your organization's current demographic make-up and can help organizations to design a relevant and impactful action plan to help all employees feel accepted, valued and included.

Part 1 Create Workforce Assessment, Engagement and Belonging Plan (Max: 1 Pt)

For All Spaces:

The project or organization meets the following requirements:

- a. An assessment of the project or organization's current workforce demographics is conducted utilizing at least four of the following:
 1. Gender (assigned, identity and/or expression).
 2. Sexual orientation.
 3. Race and ethnicity.
 4. Age.
 5. Socioeconomic background.
 6. Disability.
 7. Other metric(s) as identified by the project or organization.
- b. A workforce engagement and belonging plan is established and meets the following requirements:
 1. Identifies strategies to help all employees feel accepted, valued and included, considering findings from the demographic assessment.
 2. Tracks progress toward implementing those strategies on an annual basis.
 3. Publicly summarizes annual progress (e.g., on company website, in annual report).

EE02 INCORPORATE INTEGRATIVE DESIGN | O (MAX: 1 PT)

Intent: Facilitate collaborative planning and implementation processes to advance well-being and sustainability goals.

Summary: This WELL feature requires the facilitation of inclusive and collaborative planning and orientation processes and establishment of a health-oriented project mission.

Issue: Organizations and project teams that do not consult stakeholders during planning and development processes often fail to serve stakeholder needs and may even negatively impact the health and well-being of some populations.^{17,18} In particular, low-income and minority populations are most often excluded from planning discussions and decision-making, leading to outcomes that do not address their needs and may even increase their exposure to poor health outcomes, displacement, pollution, crime and lack of access to opportunities and services.^{17,18}

Solutions: Engaging stakeholders from a variety of backgrounds from the onset of the planning process creates the opportunity for collaborative dialogue between the key decisionmakers, planners and individuals who will be impacted by the work. Collecting varied stakeholder input can help an organization or project team identify and address its essential goals for health promotion and incorporate design that best celebrates the organization or location's unique identity, culture and place.^{17,20,21} This process helps organizations meet the needs of all stakeholders and enriches the well-being of both occupants and visitors.^{17,20,21} Furthermore, when stakeholders are educated about potential health impacts at the beginning of the process, they will have greater opportunities to specify solutions (e.g., progressive policies, design interventions, product installations) that do less harm to people and the surrounding community. Establishing a health-centered mission and orienting stakeholders to how the work will adhere to that mission can help individuals remain engaged in the process and can empower all occupants to utilize health-promoting strategies once implemented.⁴¹

Part 1 Facilitate Stakeholder Charrette (Max: 1 Pt)

For All Spaces:

Early in the planning process for the pursuit of a WELL designation, representatives from the organization or project team (e.g., leadership, human resources, project managers) facilitate a collaborative discussion that meets the following requirements:

- a. Includes representative key stakeholders including (as applicable):
 1. Owner.
 2. Facilities manager.
 3. Architects and engineers.
 4. Contractors.
 5. Employees or other occupants.
 6. Community members (if the project or organization has substantial impact on the surrounding community).
- b. Identifies the health and well-being needs of your occupants.
- c. Identifies your organization's objectives for health promotion.
- d. Defines goals related to each of the following:
 1. Occupant health and well-being.
 2. Resilience.
 3. Energy and resource management.
 4. Protection of water resources and ecosystems.
 5. Healthy and sustainable material cycles.
 6. Community inclusion.
 7. Clean and healthful local environments.

Tours of the space, communicating existing building operations, maintenance, programs and policies support adherence to WELL requirements, are conducted and made available to the following groups:

- a. All stakeholders in the development process, including (as applicable) the owner, manager, facilities management team, architects, engineers, existing employees, occupants, residents, contractors and community members.
- b. New employees during onboarding.

Part 2 Promote a Health-Oriented Mission (Max: 0 Pt)

For All Spaces:

The project or organization establishes a health-oriented mission that meets the following requirements:

- a. Outlines the project's or organization's objectives for health promotion.⁴¹
- b. Includes a statement about supporting and improving occupant health.⁴¹
- c. Incorporates relevant organizational goals or strategies established during the stakeholder charrette.
- d. Is made available to all occupants.

EE03 ADMINISTER BASIC SURVEY | O (MAX: 1 PT)

Intent: Evaluate the experience and self-reported health and well-being of individuals through surveys.

Summary: This WELL feature requires the use of third-party or custom surveys to collect feedback from occupants on their health, well-being and satisfaction with their environment, particularly on topics related to WELL strategies.

Issue: Without first asking for input, it is difficult to gauge which design, policy and programmatic approaches will most benefit the health and well-being individuals that will utilize the space.^{22,23} Decisionmakers often experience things differently from other users of the space and human perception varies across cultures, places and people.^{22,42} Employers often do not put methods in place to systematically gather input on the experience of their employees, thereby missing insights related to employee satisfaction with policies, the space and/or feelings of overall health.^{33,43,44}

Solutions: Surveys are an established tool for understanding and evaluating people's perceptions of indoor environmental conditions and wellness policies, as well as their impact on personal health and well-being.²⁴⁻²⁶ Scientifically validated surveys ensure that questions are framed appropriately and measure what they are intended to measure.⁴⁵⁻⁴⁸ Employees are more likely to stay with their company longer when they feel valued and believe their voices are being heard.¹⁹ Moreover, investing in the employee experience can reduce turnover and absenteeism and increase productivity, retention and engagement.^{19,33} Surveys that ask occupants about their satisfaction with indoor environmental quality, amenities and policies help evaluate the effectiveness of existing health and wellness interventions, identify opportunities to create a healthier environment and offer organizations the opportunity for significant return on investment.^{31,44,48,49}

Part 1 Select Project Survey (Max: 1 Pt)

For All Spaces:

For projects with ten or more eligible employees, the following requirement is met:

- a. A survey is selected from a survey provider listed on [Reference](#).

OR-----

For projects with ten or more eligible employees, the following requirement is met:

- a. A survey is created that covers the topics listed in [Reference](#).

Part 2 Administer Annual Survey and Report Results (Max: 0 Pt)

For All Spaces:

The project or organization meets the following requirements:

- a. All eligible employees are invited to participate in the survey annually. Regular reminders are sent to eligible employees to complete the survey.
- b. Survey protects all participant-identifying data through appropriate measures such as anonymous reporting and safe data storage. Any communication of results should be on an aggregated basis, such that no participant can be identified.
- c. Analysis of responses is conducted by a qualified survey professional.

The project or organization annually submits, through the platform, the following:

- a. Project and survey data, including:
 1. Total number of employees invited to complete the survey and number of employees who completed the survey.
 2. Date survey started and finished.
 3. Project location.
 4. Project type.
 5. Level of WELL Certification and/or WELL Ratings achieved (if applicable).
- b. Aggregated, anonymized survey results for each survey topic.

EE04 UTILIZE ENHANCED SURVEY | O (MAX: 1 PT)

Intent: Build on minimum occupant survey requirements with enhanced and customized questions to more comprehensively evaluate and respond to occupant feedback about experience, health and well-being.

Summary: This WELL feature requires the administration of a more robust survey to collect and report on additional topics related to the health, well-being and satisfaction of individuals.

Issue: The physical environment plays an important role in a person's physical and mental health. It also can influence the relationships that people build with one another and with an employer or brand.⁵⁰ Without first asking for input, it is difficult to gauge which design, policy and programmatic approaches will most benefit the health and well-being of individuals that will utilize the space.^{22,23} An expanded survey better assesses how a space supports the physical, cognitive and emotional needs of the users. This more in-depth feedback helps organizations understand what needs to be addressed to not only reach higher levels of satisfaction but also help people thrive in the space.⁵⁰

Solutions: Occupancy surveys measure the extent to which a building and organization promotes user health and comfort.^{24-26,29,51,52} Specifically, scientifically validated surveys frame sensitive questions appropriately and measure what they are intended to measure.^{45,46} Incorporating a range of survey topics, and utilizing surveys at a range of times, provides a comprehensive picture of which interventions impact satisfaction.²⁷⁻³⁰

Part 1 Part 1 (Max: 1 Pt)

For All Spaces:

For projects with ten or more eligible employees, the following requirements are met:

- a. Achieve Feature EE3: Administer Basic Survey using a third-party survey provider.
- b. Address at least one of the topics listed in [Reference](#) through a minimum of three additional survey questions utilizing a pre-approved survey provider listed on [Reference](#).

The project or organization meets the following requirements:

- a. Based on survey results, investigate correlations, inferential statistics (such as multivariate analysis), or other analyses beyond descriptive statistics.
- b. Submit the following through the platform annually:
 1. Aggregated, anonymized survey results for the additional topics selected from [Reference](#) in WELL v2.
 2. Results of enhanced analysis.

EE05 FACILITATE INTERVIEWS, FOCUS GROUPS, AND/OR OBSERVATIONS | O (MAX: 1 PT)

Intent: Evaluate the experience and self-reported health and well-being of individuals through interviews and observations.

Summary: This WELL feature requires utilization of interviews and observations to collect in-depth information on the health, well-being and satisfaction of individuals.

Issue: It is not common for employers to systematically or regularly gather input on the experience of their employees, such as understanding their satisfaction with policies, building design and maintenance.^{33,43,44} Well-designed surveys offer a cost-effective and time efficient way to collect quantitative data, but they have limitations. To obtain a more comprehensive understanding of user satisfaction, it is recommended to complement surveys with qualitative methods of data collection.⁵³ For example, interviews and focus groups go beyond survey responses and utilize real-time observation as a means of collecting in-depth information about user experience.³²

Solutions: Interviews and focus groups provide key insights not captured in surveys.^{54,55,56} Further, results from interviews, focus groups and observation provide contextual information to inform successful surveys.⁵⁷ Stakeholders can use results to identify the highest priority interventions that can make spaces healthier and more productive.³¹ Offering employees the opportunity to provide feedback can improve morale and retention, while also leading to insights that help create a healthier environment for all.^{44,58,59,60-63}

Part 1 Part 1 (Max: 1 Pt)

For All Spaces:

The project or organization annually conducts "evaluations" (defined here as stakeholder interviews, focus groups and/or observations) that meet the following requirements:

- a. Are conducted and analyzed by a professional experienced in qualitative research.
- b. Comprise a culturally representative sample of the population.
- c. Discuss the impact that the built environment and organizational initiatives have on occupant health and well-being.
- d. Protect participant privacy and identity.

The project or organization meets the following requirements:

- a. Compare results from the evaluations to the survey results, if applicable.
- b. Annually submit aggregated, anonymized results of the evaluations through the platform on the following:
 1. Comparison between the results of the evaluations and the survey results, as applicable.
 2. Total number of employees and number of employees who participated in the evaluations.
 3. Date the evaluations started and finished.
 4. Project location(s).
 5. Project type(s).
 6. Level of WELL achievement, if applicable.
 7. Sociodemographic information of participants (age and gender at a minimum).

EE06 ADMINISTER BASELINE AND ANNUAL SURVEYS | O (MAX: 1 PT)

Intent: Benchmark improvements to occupant satisfaction by administering surveys at multiple points in time.

Summary: This WELL feature requires the collection and analysis of information from individuals on their health, well-being and satisfaction both before and after implementing health and well-being strategies.

Issue: Given the wide variation in the design, operation and use of built spaces, it's difficult to gauge which design, policy and programmatic approaches will benefit the health and well-being of the most individuals in a space.^{22,23} Conducting preliminary surveys provides feedback that points toward opportunities for improvement and helps identify which design strategies or policies could have the greatest impact.⁶⁴ Ongoing surveys have numerous benefits such as encouraging regular communication between stakeholders and supporting the continuous enhancement of health-promoting policies.⁶⁵ To ensure comparable results and measure success, the same survey should be completed before and after making improvements.⁶⁶ Despite the benefits of ongoing surveys, budgetary constraints can be a barrier that limits the reach of these methods, thereby widening the opportunity gap for access to healthy buildings.⁵⁰

Solutions: Utilizing surveys that incorporate a range of topics provides a data-driven, comprehensive picture of which interventions impact satisfaction.^{11,14,15} Stakeholders can use results to prioritize interventions that can make spaces healthier and more productive.¹⁹ Offering the opportunity to provide feedback, along with an action plan to address dissatisfaction, can improve employee morale and retention while creating a healthier environment for all.^{5,20,21,22-25}

Part 1 Conduct Baseline Surveys (Max: 1 Pt)

Note:

This feature requires projects to also meet Feature EE3: Administer Basic Survey.

For All Spaces:

For projects with ten or more eligible employees, the following requirement is met:

- a. Prior to achieving a WELL milestone, administer a survey for eligible employees using the same [Reference](#) that will be used for Feature EE3: Administer Basic Survey.

For projects with ten or more eligible employees, the following requirement is met:

- a. Compare results from the baseline survey against subsequent survey results.
- b. Submit aggregated, anonymized survey results through the platform on the following:
 1. Aggregated, anonymized results of the baseline survey.
 2. Comparison between the results of the baseline and annual surveys.
 3. Total number of employees invited to complete the survey and number of employees who completed the survey, each time it was administered.
 4. Date each survey started and finished.
 5. Location where each survey was administered.
 6. Project type.
 7. Level of WELL achievement, if applicable.
 8. Sociodemographic information (age and gender at a minimum).

Note: Additional baseline survey is not required at recertification.

Part 2 Implement Action Plan (Max: 0 Pt)

For All Spaces:

The project or organization creates and implements a plan that addresses the following:

- a. Defines target satisfaction levels reported in the annual survey.

The project or organization submits on an annual basis:

- a. Comparison of satisfaction results to aspirational targets.
- b. Improvement strategies to be implemented, if applicable.

EE07 DEVELOP STRESS MANAGEMENT PLAN | O (MAX: 1 PT)

Intent: Identify areas of employee stress within the organization and create a plan to manage it.

Summary: This WELL feature requires the assessment of sources of stress for individuals within the organization and creation of a plan for addressing them.

Issue: Stress is directly linked to seven of the ten leading causes of death in the world, and is related to numerous negative health consequences, including obesity, high cholesterol, muscle tension and backache, migraines and chronic headaches, as well as poorer recovery from illness.^{48,67-69} Stress is also a predictor of adverse mental health outcomes, such as depression, anxiety, substance use, suicide, emotional exhaustion and burnout.⁶⁸⁻⁷⁰ When stressed, individuals are less likely to engage in health-promoting behaviors, including smoking cessation, nutritious eating and physical activity.⁶⁹ Employee stress is incredibly common with 77% of U.S. workers reporting experience with job-related stress and 57% saying it has negatively impacted them, often in ways associated with workplace burnout. Stressed employees are more likely to quit, be involved in an accident and experience reduced performance. A study from the United States suggests stressed employees incur an estimated 46% higher health care expenditures compared to less-stressed peers.⁷² Employees who experience stress are more likely to miss work, resulting in an estimated one million stress-related worker absences per day in the United States.⁷³

Solutions: Numerous factors increase the likelihood of work-related stress, such as low support from supervisors and colleagues, little control over work processes, unmanageable and high demands on work output, concern over a lack of job security and low opportunity for advancement or professional development.⁶⁹ Stress and its associated risks can be reduced through interventions that solve for job stressors, such as improved operational policies, programs that increase co-worker and supervisor support and training modules that help employees develop resilience against job-related stress.^{68,70}

Part 1 Part 1 (Max: 1 Pt)

For All Spaces:

The project or organization develops a stress management plan by completing the following:

- a. Assess at least three of the organization- or project-wide metrics below:
 1. Frequency of employees working more than 48 hours per seven-day period.⁷⁴
 2. Frequency of absenteeism amongst employees (i.e., use of paid or unpaid time off due to disability or illness).
 3. Frequency of employees not using allocated paid time off.
 4. Frequency of performance issues amongst employees.
 5. Employee retention and turnover rates.
 6. Responses to employee satisfaction surveys that indicate high levels of stress or burnout.
- b. Identify opportunities for improvement, covering the topics below:
 1. Organizational change to address employee stress (e.g., adjustments to work environment, shifts in work processes, workload, management or staffing).⁷⁰
 2. Employee participation in organizational decisions regarding work-related issues that may affect stress (e.g., work environment, processes, scheduling).⁷⁰
- c. Create and implement a stress management plan that identifies the following:
 1. The person leading implementation of the plan.⁷⁵
 2. The changes that are to be completed as part of the plan.⁷⁵
 3. Who will be impacted by those changes.⁷⁵
 4. When and how the changes will be implemented.⁷⁵
 5. Confirmation of support from executive leadership.⁷⁶

APPENDIX C1:

The following topics must be covered by the custom survey selected for Option 2: Custom Survey in Feature C04 Part 1:

1. General building and occupancy information, including job type or time spent in the building.
2. Indoor environmental quality of air, water, light, sound and thermal comfort.
3. Ergonomics, layout and aesthetics.
4. Maintenance and cleanliness.
5. Amenities: access to nature, views and nourishment options.
6. Satisfaction with how policies and amenities impact and support healthy behaviors (e.g., physical activity, healthy eating).
7. Access to and engagement with workplace wellness initiatives or offerings (e.g., physical activity incentive programs, health benefits and services).
8. Employee support policies (e.g., paid parental and family leave, flexible working arrangements).
9. Productivity and engagement (e.g., through measures of hours worked or motivation).
10. Self-rated health and well-being.
11. Standard sociodemographic information (age and gender at minimum).

APPENDIX C2:

Approved additional topics to add to the pre-approved survey in Part 1: Select Enhanced Survey in Feature C05: Enhanced Occupant Survey.

Category	Topic
Healthy Behaviors:	Mode of transportation to and from work and distance or time traveled
	Hydration
	Sleep satisfaction, quality and/or quantity
	Physical activity
	Alcohol consumption
	Healthy eating
	Ability to take restorative breaks
	Smoking habits
Enhanced Health and Well-being:	Sick building syndrome
	Mental health
	Social, cultural or economic well-being
	Musculoskeletal issues (e.g., back, neck pain)
	Health literacy
Performance and Resilience:	Assessment of individual work style, patterns, processes, space utilization and ability to focus or collaborate
	Workplace performance
	Engagement
	Workload, stress, burnout and/or employee resilience
	Creative thinking
Policies and Culture:	Safety and security, including for diverse population groups (e.g., cultural, ethnic, gender, ability, age)
	Emergency preparedness (e.g., pandemic, fire, natural disaster)
	Workplace wellness programs and perceived effectiveness
	Leadership investment in employee health and perceived effectiveness
	Social equity programs and perceived effectiveness
Other:	Comparison to previous space
	Values related to, level of access to and experience of nature
	Feedback on specific design interventions
	Healthy behaviors, ergonomics, mental health and productivity for remote workers
	Additional sociodemographic information (e.g., education, ethnicity, income)

RESPONSIBLE HIRING AND LABOR PRACTICES (EH)

The Responsible Hiring and Labor Practices action area includes strategies that support workforce representation, engagement and belonging.

Increasing workforce representation is a complex process that touches upon most of an organization's operations, including hiring practices, compensation and performance evaluations. As a best practice, organizations can assess their current workforce demographics by considering a variety of factors, including gender, sexual orientation, race and ethnicity, age, socioeconomic background disability and more. There are numerous benefits to having a workforce comprised of people with different backgrounds across all levels of an organization, including improved employee satisfaction, teamwork and loyalty.^{35,40} Additionally, greater workforce representation, particularly at the senior leadership level, has been shown to drive innovation and enhance organizational performance.³⁵

There is a lack of representation at the executive level internationally, with women typically representing 21% or less and ethnic minorities representing 16% or less of these high-ranking positions.³⁴ In a 2016 study of 132 companies in the United States, only 55% identified representation of varied cultural backgrounds as a top priority.^{37,77} Additionally, bias in both hiring and compensation practices create barriers to cultivating a workforce that consists of employees with varied background. Despite this, few companies use blind resume reviews, a strategy that has been shown to be effective in reducing hiring bias.^{37,77,78}

Globally, while nearly 70% of employed adults want to understand what fair pay is for their positions and skill sets, only about one third of companies disclose salaries internally, creating barriers to compensating all people fairly.⁷⁹ Further wage transparency can build employee trust, and clearly communicating job requirements and establishing fair and consistent performance objectives can help build a productive work environment.^{80,81} Employee resource groups (ERGs) have the potential to help all employees feel valued and accepted.⁸²

Another critical aspect of cultivating a fair workplace includes addressing the critical, yet often unaddressed, issue of modern slavery. Modern slavery refers to the various situations in which a person is recruited, transported or compelled to work through force, fraud or coercion.^{83,84} Global reports estimate that a majority of modern slavery victims – nearly 30 million – reside in the Asia Pacific region, where many global supply chains originate.^{85–87} Organizations seldom sufficiently assess modern slavery risks in their supply chains because supply chains often reach across sectors and regions. Regardless of complexity, organizations can take meaningful steps toward mitigating the risk of modern slavery by, for example, implementing a modern slavery action plan, adhering to a due diligence process that is designed to comprehensively detect risks in the supply chain, implementing ethical procurement policies, providing regular employee training and/or defining processes for incident reporting.^{88,89}

EH01 IMPLEMENT WORKFORCE SUPPORT SYSTEMS | O (MAX: 1 PT)

Intent: Promote employee well-being through non-discrimination policies and foster engagement and belonging through adequate leadership support and organizational resourcing.

Summary: This WELL feature requires organizations to implement policies and training to mitigate discrimination and bias as well as allocate resources and leadership capacity to help all employees feel valued, accepted and included.

Issue: Research estimates that the vast majority (64%-85%) of companies identify employee engagement and belonging as a strategic priority.^{90, 654} Yet, only 4% of companies surveyed feel they are implementing successful policies and programs.⁹⁰ Further, less than 30% of those companies have leaders who are accountable to results.⁶⁵⁴ One contributor to inequality in the workplace is from a perceived lack of safety and fear of repercussion when reporting discrimination or abuse at work.⁹¹ It is estimated that only 30% of employees in the United States who are harassed on the basis of protected classes (e.g., gender, race, disability) file internal complaints.⁹² Other barriers to reporting include lack of anonymity, company culture, inaccessible and inflexible reporting processes, and the unlikelihood of a positive outcome.⁹¹ For example between 2013 and 2016, just 15% of charges filed by LGBTQ+ individuals in the U.S. resulted in a positive outcome for the reporting party.⁹³

Solutions: There are various benefits to having systems in place to support your workforce. Anti-bias policies paired with regular training can help sustain an inclusive organizational culture.⁶⁵⁵ Implementing anti-bias training, specifically, is associated with increased self-report knowledge, awareness and attitudes towards conscious and unconscious bias.⁶⁵⁶ Experts generally agree that in order for organizations to impact behavior, that training must be paired with other comprehensive organizational strategies that aim to impact both employee knowledge and culture.⁶⁵⁵ Implementing employee resource groups (ERGs) can also improve employee engagement⁸² and belonging.⁶⁵⁷ In fact, 74% of companies report that ERGs are a common component of their workforce support strategy.⁶⁵⁴ ERGs have the potential to empower underrepresented populations and help employees feel valued and accepted.⁸² For the LGBTQ+ population specifically, ERGs may reduce prejudice and discrimination while creating a sense of community.⁹⁴ Furthermore, anonymous reporting improves psychological safety and removes barriers to speaking up.⁹⁵

Part 1 Part 1 (Max: 1 Pt)

For All Spaces:

The project or organization meets the following requirements:

- a. Implements a comprehensive non-discrimination policy that includes the following:
 1. Reporting protocol that allows occupants to anonymously report observed or experienced discrimination, resulting in a review by a third party and/or internal human resource professional or other ethics or compliance professional with the offending individual to mitigate future incidents.
 2. Penalties for retaliating against or falsifying reports of bias.
- b. Annual trainings available to all employees that include the following topics:
 1. The benefits of having a workforce comprised of people with different backgrounds.
 2. Preventing, identifying and navigating observed or experienced discrimination.
 3. Preventing, identifying and reducing bias.
- c. Provides employees with resources (e.g., budget, meeting space, information, access to external support groups) to establish employee resource groups (ERGs) that are focused on fostering engagement and belonging within the workforce.
- d. Has at least one dedicated senior-level employee whose primary responsibility is to plan and oversee strategies that promote workforce engagement and belonging. The individual must have a dedicated budget and be employed at the executive (C-Suite) level or report directly to a member of the executive (C-Suite) team.⁶³⁷

EH02 IMPLEMENT FAIR HIRING AND PAY PRACTICES | O (MAX: 1 PT)

Intent: Promote fair treatment of all workers through hiring and pay practices.

Summary: This WELL feature requires projects to establish fair hiring and pay policies that include workforce representation goals and blind resume reviews and approaches such as a commitment to determine wages independent of demographic factors, providing wage transparency to employees, and/or contract negotiation training.

Issue: Individual biases, conscious or unconscious, may contribute to unfair hiring outcomes. For example, knowledge of an applicant's name or other identifying information may give clues about their gender, race, or age that bias objective and fair evaluation of their application materials.⁶⁵⁸ Worldwide, nearly 70% of employed adults want more transparency about fair pay for their positions and skill sets in both their organization and the local market(s).⁷⁹ Yet, only about one third of international companies located in the U.S., Canada, United Kingdom, France, Germany, Switzerland and the Netherlands disclose salaries internally.⁷⁹ Globally, women earn only 77 cents for every dollar made by men and the compensation gap is even greater for women of color, immigrant women and women with children.⁹⁸ On average in the U.S., full-time LGBTQ+ employees earn only 90% of the wages earned by typical employees (those earning median wages).⁹⁹ The pay gap is even wider for transgender individuals. In the U.S., trans men earn only 70 cents and trans women earn only 60 cents for every dollar earned by a typical employee. In the United Kingdom, transgender individuals face a similar disparity, with an estimated 14% compensation gap.^{99,100} The wage gap for people with disabilities in the United Kingdom can range from less than 10% to more than 55%, depending on the disability and intersectionality with gender, ethnicity and/or race.¹⁰¹

Solutions: Addressing fair hiring and pay practices are complex and require attention across many human resources functions including hiring practices, salary and wage determination and performance evaluations. Field studies from Europe, Australia and North America suggest blind resume reviews can prevent discrimination in early stages of recruitment.¹⁰³

Part 1 Part 1 (Max: 1 Pt)

For All Spaces:

The project or organization meets the following requirements:

- a. Implements a hiring policy that:
 1. Bans the request of salary history.
 2. Requires blind resume reviews (i.e., information is removed that could indicate race/ethnicity, gender and socioeconomic background, including, at minimum, name and home address).
 3. Establishes hiring evaluation protocols with transparent performance standards (e.g., communicating job requirements clearly and establishing fair and consistent performance objectives for all employees, demonstrating transparency and clear expectations for every role).
 4. Establishes goals for hiring candidates with varied backgrounds, perspectives and experiences, which hiring managers are evaluated at performance reviews at least annually.
 5. Establishes having varied backgrounds, perspectives and experiences represented in mid-and executive-level leadership positions and/or on the board of directors.
- b. Implements a compensation policy that is made available to all employees and includes at least three of the following:
 1. Determination of compensation independent of gender identity, sexual orientation, race and ethnicity, age, disability status, or religion.
 2. Provision of compensation that meets basic needs and provides some discretionary income to all employees.
 3. Compensation transparency (e.g., making employee compensation figures visible either internally, externally or both) or published compensation ranges for all titles.⁶⁵⁹⁻⁶⁶¹
 4. A blind annual evaluation of all employee compensation to assess and improve compensation distribution.
 5. Annual trainings or workshops for employees on compensation and contract negotiation.

EH03 DISCLOSE AND EVALUATE RESPONSIBLE LABOR PRACTICES | O (MAX: 1 PT)

Intent: Promote organizational commitment to responsible labor practices and support human rights by addressing modern slavery in the supply chain.

Summary: This WELL feature requires the evaluation and disclosure of modern slavery labor practices in the organization's operations and supply chain, specifically in the areas of construction, cleaning and catering.

Issue: Modern slavery refers to the various situations in which a person is recruited, transported or compelled to work through force, fraud or coercion.^{83,84} Modern slavery practices may include traditional slavery (or involuntary servitude), human trafficking, forced labor, bonded labor, sex trafficking and the worst forms of child labor.^{83,84} The Global Slavery Index estimates that in 2016 there were over 40 million victims of modern slavery worldwide, including 24.9 million in forced labor.¹⁰⁶ Modern slavery is recognized as a violation of human rights, including the right to health, and as a global public health issue.¹⁰⁷⁻¹¹⁰ Modern slavery has severe consequences for the victim's health and well-being, including increased risk of physical injury; mental health issues like anxiety, depression and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD); exposure to infectious disease; suicide and limited access to healthcare.¹⁰⁷⁻¹¹⁰ Organizations seldom sufficiently assess modern slavery risks in their supply chains because supply chains often reach across sectors and regions. A study from the United Kingdom concluded that, despite the passing of the Modern Slavery Act in 2015, over 70% of companies believe that modern slavery is likely taking place at some point in their supply chains.¹¹¹

Solutions: Organizations can play a critical role in helping to identify and prevent occurrences of modern slavery.⁸⁹ To address modern slavery in the supply chain, companies must first establish due diligence processes that comprehensively detect risks and influencing conditions.⁸⁸ The United Kingdom's Modern Slavery Act of 2015 requires companies to establish and disclose a risk assessment process, their anti-slavery policies and the steps taken to address identified risks.¹¹² The Australian Modern Slavery Act of 2018 similarly requires entities to publish an annual report on actions they have taken to address modern slavery in their operations and supply chains.¹¹³ These acts help organizations progress toward the U.N. Sustainable Development Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth, which calls for eradicating forced labor, modern slavery, human trafficking and child labor by 2025.¹¹⁴

Part 1 Part 1 (Max: 1 Pt)

For All Spaces:

The project or organization meets the following requirements:

- a. A comprehensive mapping of the project's or organization's structure, operations and supply chains is conducted annually for Tier 1 suppliers in the following sectors (as applicable).¹¹⁵
 1. Construction.
 2. Cleaning.
 3. Catering.
 4. Security.
 5. Maintenance.
- b. A risk assessment is conducted annually that evaluates risks in the project's or organization's operations and Tier 1 suppliers (at a minimum) in the above sectors for the following practices associated with modern slavery.^{115,116}
 1. Worst forms of child labor.
 2. Forced labor.
 3. Traditional slavery.
 4. Bonded labor.
 5. Human trafficking.
- c. A report is completed annually that discloses the following information, is reviewed by executives in the C-Suite, board of directors and/or equivalent high-level stakeholders, and published on the project or organization's website:¹¹⁶
 1. Processes of evaluation and risk assessment.
 2. Results of evaluation or risk assessment, including where modern slavery risks have been identified.
 3. Statement of commitment (including established goals and policies) aimed at identifying, preventing and mitigating modern slavery practices in the project's or organization's operations and supply chain.

Note:

This feature is a beta strategy and has an additional documentation requirement (beta feature feedback form). The feedback form supports IWBI in developing new features that are effective and applicable to projects around the world.

EH04 IMPLEMENT RESPONSIBLE LABOR PRACTICES | O (MAX: 2 PT)

Intent: Promote organizational commitment to responsible and transparent labor practices to address modern slavery in the supply chain and support human rights.

Summary: This WELL feature requires the addressing of modern slavery labor practices in the organization's operations and supply chain, specifically in the areas of construction, cleaning and catering.

Issue: Global reports estimate that a majority of modern slavery victims – nearly 30 million – reside in the Asia Pacific region, through which many global supply chains pass.⁸⁵⁻⁸⁷ Of the 195 countries in the world, only 40 have investigated labor exploitation in supply chains and almost half of all countries worldwide have yet to criminalize slavery.^{117,118} Industries found to be at highest risk for modern slavery include clothing, electronics and technology manufacturing; food and agriculture (including catering); and construction.^{88,119} The cleaning sector is also considered a high-risk environment given the complexity and opaque operations of the industry. In 2011, the Fair Work Ombudsman (FWO) reported that out of 315 Australian cleaning companies analyzed, 37.1% were non-compliant with responsible labor practices, including underpayment of wages and lack of recordkeeping.^{88,120} Organizations seldom sufficiently assess modern slavery risks in their supply chains because supply chains often reach across sectors and regions. A study from the United Kingdom concluded that, despite the passing of the Modern Slavery Act in 2015, over 70% of companies believe that modern slavery is likely taking place at some point in their supply chains.¹¹¹

Solutions: Organizations can implement action plans to prevent occurrences of modern slavery.⁸⁹ Best practices for action plans include the establishment of ethical procurement policies and processes for incident reporting, employee training on relevant policies, and engagement and collaboration with Tier 1 suppliers. In addition, leading-edge approaches include standalone modern slavery or human rights policies, deeper risk assessments into suppliers ranked Tier 2 through Tier 6, capacity-building with suppliers, strong remediation mechanisms and slavery-specific performance metrics.^{119,121} Implementing these steps also supports progress toward U.N. Sustainable Development Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth, which calls for eradicating forced labor, modern slavery, human trafficking and child labor by 2025.¹¹⁴

Part 1 Part 1 (Max: 2 Pt)

For All Spaces:

The project or organization implements an action plan that meets the following requirements.^{115,116}

- a. Establishes annual targets for the prevention and/or mitigation of modern slavery in their operations and supply chain in the following areas (as applicable):
 1. Construction.
 2. Cleaning.
 3. Catering.
 4. Security.
 5. Maintenance.
- b. Describes how the effectiveness of the implemented strategies are assessed annually and updates targets and/or strategies accordingly.¹¹⁵
- c. Addresses implementation of the following strategies to meet established targets.^{115,116}
 1. Anti-slavery and anti-human trafficking policies.
 2. Responsible procurement policies.
 3. Annual trainings, mandatory for employees involved in procurement and made available to all employees, educating about the consequences of modern slavery and the project or organization's policies and steps for preventing, identifying and reporting observed or potential incidences of modern slavery practices.
 4. Reporting protocol that allows employees and supply chain Tier 1 suppliers to anonymously report modern slavery risks and practices.
 5. Process for review and remediation of any identified modern slavery practices to prevent and mitigate future incidents.
 6. Process for consultation and revision of contracts, including establishing supplier obligations to address modern slavery, with any suppliers that have been identified as high risk for modern slavery practices.
- d. The requirements in a, b and c are met for supply chain Tiers according to the table below.

Feature Tier	Supplier Level	Point Value
1	Supply Chain Tier 1	1 point
2	At least Supply Chain Tiers 1 & 2	2 points

Note:

This feature is a beta strategy and has an additional documentation requirement (beta feature feedback form). The feedback form supports IWBI in developing new features that are effective and applicable to projects around the world.

EH05 B SELECT PRODUCTS FROM MANUFACTURERS THAT PROVIDE LIVING WAGES | O (MAX: 1 PT)

Intent: Accelerate the elimination of modern slavery by selecting building products from manufacturers that advance and verify fair labor rights across their facilities.

Summary: This WELL feature requires the selection of building products from manufacturers that verify that fair labor practices are implemented at their manufacturing facilities.

Issue: Around the globe, people are tricked or forced into exploitative situations that they cannot refuse or leave, suffering what is collectively known as modern slavery conditions.⁶³⁵ Not counting commercial sexual exploitation, an estimated 21.2 million people (of which 13 million were children) were subject to forced labor exploitation in 2021.⁶³⁶ Products used in the construction of real estate are significant contributors to this problem.⁶³⁷ Due to the complexity and obscurity of supply chains, it can be nearly impossible to identify products and materials that are "slavery-free."⁶³⁷

Impact: Creating demand for "slavery-free" products, in addition to aiding in the elimination of forced labor and the worst forms of child labor, can steer the market towards making fair labor practices the baseline across the building products industry.⁶³⁷ As one of the main contributors of decent work,⁶³⁸ provision of a living wage is likely to improve workers' physical and mental health and has the potential of breaking the poverty cycle.⁶³⁹

Part 1 Part 1 (Max: 1 Pt)

For All Spaces:

For at least five manufacturers of products from the product classes listed in Appendix X1, one the following is provided:

- a. Manufacturer's proof of accreditation provided by one of the following organizations:
 1. SAI (Social Accountability International) [Reference](#), administered by Social Accountability Accreditation Services (SAAS).⁶⁴⁰
 2. Any certification from the [Reference](#).⁶⁴¹
 3. A living wage certification from a member of the [Reference](#).⁶⁴²
- b. Manufacturer's public statement disclosing the living wage provision that includes the following:
 1. How a living wage is provided to all people (including contractors) who work in the manufacturer's facilities.
 2. How the living wage is determined and regularly updated.
 3. How organization-wide compliance with the living wage provision is confirmed, including metrics used to measure compliance.

Note:

This feature is a beta strategy and has an additional documentation requirement (beta feature feedback form). The feedback form supports IWBI in developing new features that are effective and applicable to projects around the world.

EH06 B SELECT PRODUCTS WITH CERTIFIED RAW MATERIALS | O (MAX: 1 PT)

Intent: Accelerate the elimination of modern slavery by selecting building products from manufacturers that advance and verify fair labor rights across their facilities and in their supply chains.

Summary: This WELL feature requires the selection of building products from manufacturers that verify that fair labor practices are implemented across their supply chains.

Issue: Around the globe, people are tricked or forced into exploitative situations that they cannot refuse or leave, suffering what is collectively known as modern slavery conditions.⁶³⁵ Not counting commercial sexual exploitation, an estimated 21.2 million people (of which 13 million were children) were subject to forced labor exploitation in 2021.⁶³⁶ Products used in the construction of real estate are significant contributors to this problem.⁶³⁷ Due to the complexity and obscurity of supply chains, it can be nearly impossible to identify products and materials that are "slavery-free."⁶³⁷

Impact: Creating demand for "slavery-free" products, in addition to aiding in the elimination of forced labor and the worst forms of child labor, can steer the market towards making fair labor practices the baseline across the building products industry.⁶³⁷ Several certification bodies assess and certify good labor practices during the extraction and processing of common raw building materials such as cement, steel and copper.

Part 1 Part 1 (Max: 1 Pt)

For All Spaces:

For at least ten products from the product classes listed in Appendix X1, each made by a distinct manufacturer, one of the following is met:

- a. Has one of the following:
 1. A [Reference](#) with a Silver, Gold or Platinum Social Fairness level.⁶⁴³
 2. Any [Reference](#) that includes criteria for "Minimum Entitlement including Wages," "Workplace Health and Safety," and "Modern Slavery and Human Rights including Labor Rights."⁶⁴⁴
 3. A [Reference](#).⁶⁴⁵
- b. For products containing materials listed in Appendix X2, each of those materials (up to a maximum of five materials per product) meet one of the following:
 1. Is certified under one of the applicable standards listed in Appendix X2.
 2. Is supplied by a manufacturer that meets Feature EH05: β Select Products From Manufacturers that Provide Living Wages.

Note:

This feature is a beta strategy and has an additional documentation requirement (beta feature feedback form). The feedback form supports IWBI in developing new features that are effective and applicable to projects around the world.

EH07 B SELECT MANUFACTURERS WITH TRANSPARENCY IN SUPPLY CHAIN PRACTICES | O (MAX: 1 PT)

Intent: Accelerate the elimination of modern slavery by selecting building products from manufacturers that advance and verify fair labor rights in their supply chains.

Summary: This WELL feature requires the selection of building products from manufacturers that verify that fair labor practices are implemented across their supply chains.

Solutions: Around the globe, people are tricked or forced into exploitative situations that they cannot refuse or leave, suffering what is collectively known as modern slavery conditions.⁶³⁵ Not counting commercial sexual exploitation, an estimated 21.2 million people (of which 13 million were children) were subject to forced labor exploitation in 2021.⁶³⁶ Products used in the construction of real estate are significant contributors to this problem.⁶³⁷ Due to the complexity and obscurity of supply chains, it can be nearly impossible to identify products and materials that are "slavery-free."⁶³⁷

Impact: Creating demand for "slavery-free" products, in addition to aiding in the elimination of forced labor and the worst forms of child labor, can steer the market towards making fair labor practices the baseline across the building products industry.⁶³⁷ Companies can assess labor conditions within their own facilities and across their own supply chains through third-party audits and/or the achievement of relevant certifications.

Part 1 Part 1 (Max: 1 Pt)

For All Spaces:

For at least five manufacturers of products from the product classes listed in Appendix X1, one of the following is met:

- a. The manufacturer is a Full Member of the [Reference](#).
- b. The manufacturer has made a public statement disclosing the following:
 1. Confirmation that at least five of the manufacturer's suppliers (or 5%, whichever is greater) have been assessed for labor conditions by third-party auditors.^{647,648}
 2. Confirmation that the audits were based on semi-announced visits to the manufacturer's supplier facilities.⁶⁴⁹
 3. The audit criteria, sampling methodology and relevant metrics of compliance.
 4. Confirmation that the facilities were found in compliance with local regulation and the following principles:⁶⁵⁰
 1. Workers' freedom of movement.
 2. Workers' freedom of association and collective bargaining.
 3. Forced labor.
 4. Working hours and remuneration.
 5. Occupational health and safety.
 6. Worst forms of child labor.
 7. Sexual harassment.

Note:

This feature is a beta strategy and has an additional documentation requirement (beta feature feedback form). The feedback form supports IWBI in developing new features that are effective and applicable to projects around the world.

APPENDIX X1:

The following denominations for product classes apply throughout the Materials concept:

1. Millwork and fixtures: Built-in cabinetry/bespoke joinery, countertops, window treatments (e.g., curtains, blinds) and window films. Does not include beddings, pillows, artwork, rugs and appliances.
2. Ceiling and wall finishes: Ceiling and wall planks and tiles, acoustical treatments, wall bases and wallcoverings including wallpaper.
3. Electrical and electronic products: Cables, electrical boxes; tubing and conduit; fire alarm notification and initiating devices (e.g., strobes, pull stations); environmental, HVAC, occupancy and motion sensors and meters; and relays, thermostats and load break switches.
4. Flooring: Carpeting, resilient flooring (e.g., sheet, tiles) and any other natural or engineered floor covering product, including finished poured flooring.
5. Furniture: Movable objects intended to support various human activities such as seating (e.g., chairs, stools, sofas), eating or working (e.g., tables, desks, workstations), and sleeping (e.g., beds). Also includes objects for holding and storage such as chests, shelves, bookcases, file cabinets and cabinetry (except custom-made or built-in), and space separations such as freestanding partition panels.
6. Interior doors and windows, including door casings.
7. Insulation: Thermal and acoustic insulation in walls and ceilings. Unless explicitly stated, this class excludes duct, tube and pipe insulation.
8. Wet-applied products: Paints, adhesives, sealants, coatings and finished poured flooring.
9. Demountable Wall Partitions: Permanently installed wall systems that are designed to be relocated without damage to the product.

APPENDIX X2:

The table below lists eligible certifications by type of material.

Material	Relevant Certifications	Scope*
Copper	The Copper Mark Certification	Upstream supply chain
	Responsible Mineral Initiative	Product and Upstream supply chain
	LME (London Metal Exchange) Responsible Sourcing	Extracting/Farming
Steel and Iron	Initiative for Responsible Mining Assurance Standard	Extracting/Farming
	LME (London Metal Exchange) Responsible Sourcing	Extracting/Farming
	Responsible Minerals Initiative	Product and Upstream supply chain
Aluminum	Responsible Steel Certification	Product and Upstream supply chain
	Aluminum Stewardship Initiative (ASI) Chain of Custody Standard	Product
	Aluminum Stewardship Initiative (ASI) Performance Standard	Upstream supply chain
Stone	Ethical Stone Register	Upstream supply chain
	Fair Stone Standard	Upstream supply chain
	XertifiX Standard-Label	Extracting/Farming and Upstream supply chain
Mica, Gypsum, and Silica	Initiative for Responsible Mining Assurance Standard	Extracting/Farming
	Responsible Mica Initiative	Extracting/Farming and Upstream supply chain
	Responsible Minerals Initiative (conformant facilities)	Product and Upstream supply chain
Concrete	Concrete Sustainability Council Certification	Product and Upstream supply chain
	American Tree Farm System (ATFS)	Upstream supply chain
	Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC)	Extracting/Farming and Upstream supply chain
Timber	Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI)	Product, Upstream supply chain and Extracting/Farming
	Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) Chain of Custody Certification	Product, Upstream supply chain and Extracting/Farming
	Better Cotton	Product and Extracting/Farming
	Fairtrade Cotton Mark	Product and Upstream supply chain
	Fairtrade Textile Standard	Product and Upstream supply chain
Textiles	FSC Certified Viscose	Product, Upstream supply chain and Extracting/Farming
	Global Organic Textile Standard	Product and Upstream supply chain
	Good Weave	Product and Upstream supply chain
	Responsible Wool Standard	Extracting/Farming
	STeP by Oeko-Tex	Upstream supply chain
	Global Recycle Standard	Product and Upstream supply chain
Leather	STeP by Oeko-Tex	Upstream supply chain

*Certifications may be of the following scope

Product: voluntary standards established by independent, third-party groups relating to environmental, social, ethical, and product safety issues. These groups incur the cost and responsibility of certifying that products adhere to their standards and award a certification seal, or logo, that proves compliance.

Manufacturing: creation or production of goods with the help of equipment, labor, machines, tools, and chemical or biological processing or formulation.

Upstream Supply Chain: a network of individuals and companies involved in creating and delivering a product to the consumer. Links on the chain begin with the producers of the raw materials and end with the finished product to the end user.

Extracting/Farming: obtaining natural resources from the Earth's crust (or other sources), growing crops or raising livestock to use them for various purposes.

INCLUSIVE DESIGN (ED)

The Inclusive Design action area promotes design strategies that aim to support all potential users of a space.

Design plays a critical role in making spaces more accessible to people of all needs, abilities and identities.¹²² More than one billion people, or about 15% of the global population, live with some type of disability and, among this population, nearly 200 million individuals experience difficulties functioning within the built environment.^{123,124} Buildings host a vast array of individuals and communities, and yet despite the profound impact design can have on who is able to access, use and interact with a space, most environments are not designed with consideration of all individual needs or abilities.^{124,125}

Spaces and places that are inclusive of all individuals go beyond the minimum required to comply with local code.¹²⁶ Universal design addresses multiple aspects of a built space, including the infrastructure, signage and technology within, and seeks to enhance the opportunity for all individuals to exist independently and comfortably in that space.¹²⁶ The ability for people to feel acoustically comfortable and comprehend speech is a fundamental consideration of universal design. Reduced or low speech intelligibility can negatively impact occupant satisfaction and well-being, especially for non-native speakers, individuals with hearing loss and people who are neurodiverse.^{127–135} To improve acoustical comfort, each space should be designed specifically to accommodate its intended activity. Workspaces for concentration, collaboration, socialization and learning warrant specific design considerations.^{136,137}

Additionally, electric light quality and glare control are vital considerations for improving the indoor environment for all. Prolonged exposure to bright or flickering lights can cause headaches, distraction and lost productivity, especially for people who are neurodiverse or light sensitive.¹³⁸ Negative health impacts may also come from exposure to glare (excessive brightness of the light source, excessive brightness-contrast and/or excessive quantity of light).^{139,140} People with autism tend to experience greater discomfort from glare, especially at work.¹⁴¹ Cultivating a comfortable, accessible and healthier space requires attention to lighting design, including the use of fixtures that reduce glare and do not display signs of flicker.

Natural elements, such as plants and daylight, have been linked with multiple health promoting benefits, including helping to relieve occupants from stress and mental fatigue, as well as helping occupants establish a sense of place.^{142–144} Biophilic soundscapes can support focus, stimulation and relaxation in people who are neurodiverse.¹⁴⁵ Establishing connection to place can also help uncover historical contributions by and celebrate the culture of communities that historically suffered as a result of colonization, displacement and relocation.^{146,147}

Another key aspect of inclusive spaces is the ability for individuals to adjust their furniture and accessories to accommodate their comfort. Musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) are among the top drivers of global disability and one of the most commonly reported causes of lost or restricted work time, absenteeism and low productivity.^{148,149} A 2019 survey from the United Kingdom found that among workers who are neurodiverse, 87% felt that adjustments at work, including physical space, would enhance their work performance.¹⁵⁰ Adjustable workstations and ergonomic chairs also improve accessibility for individuals with mobility impairments and can better support pregnant women.^{151,152} Moreover, comprehensive ergonomic programming can improve both quality of life and job performance for employees with disabilities.¹⁵³ Ideal ergonomic interventions are holistic and aim to accommodate all individuals. Ergonomic solutions should address the design of the physical environment (e.g., adjustable furniture), the work itself (e.g., process, practices) and human behavior (e.g., education, training).^{154,155} Cultivating an ideal ergonomic workspace requires that all necessary tasks assigned to that space are considered, movement through a variety of positions is enabled and a range of body types are accommodated.

All humans need to access restrooms, and restrooms require specific furnishings to be considered inclusive for all individuals. Many individuals lack access to restrooms that accommodate their needs, such as women, caregivers and transgender or gender non-conforming individuals.^{156–159} However restrooms can be intentionally designed with additional space for maneuvering and furnished with accessories like trash cans to support the needs of women, caregivers, children and individuals with physical and mental disabilities.^{156,157} Single-user facilities that are open to all genders provide safe and comfortable restrooms for all individuals.¹⁶⁰

Inclusive and universal design principles extend outside a building as well. For example, the site and neighborhood surrounding a building affects a person's physical activity opportunities and choices.^{161–165} At a community scale, availability of sidewalks, parks and bicycle lanes also affect how individuals use and interact with the environment.^{166,167} Thoughtful site planning, design and selection positively impact physical activity and active living, and can improve nearly every aspect of community health and vitality from social well-being to economic development.^{168–170}

ED01 INTEGRATE ACCESSIBLE AND UNIVERSAL DESIGN | O (MAX: 1 PT)

Intent: Provide buildings and spaces that are accessible, comfortable and usable for people of all backgrounds and abilities.

Summary: This WELL feature requires going above and beyond accessibility laws and/or codes by integrating universal design principles that accommodate a range of needs and create a more supportive environment for all.

Issue: More than one billion people, or about 15% of the global population, live with some type of disability.¹²⁴ Many places are not designed with consideration for people with disabilities and, among those living with a disability, nearly 200 million people experience difficulties functioning within buildings.^{123,124} Older generations are more likely to experience a disability and, by 2050, the global population of individuals aged 60 years and older is expected to total 2 billion.¹⁷¹

Solutions: Spaces and places that are truly supportive incorporate design strategies that go beyond what is required by law or code.¹²⁶ They deploy universal design elements that invite and empower all individuals to access, use and find delight in the space.³⁰ Universal design addresses multiple aspects of a building, including its infrastructure, signage and technologies, and seeks to enhance the opportunity for all individuals to achieve independence and comfort.¹²⁶

Part 1 Part 1 (Max: 1 Pt)

For All Spaces:

The project considers best practices in universal design to accommodate a diverse range of disabilities and needs by implementing at a minimum one strategy in each of the following categories:¹⁷²

- a. Physical access: entry, exit and key interaction points that enable accessible entrance to the project and strategies that accommodate user changes as needed (e.g., stair-free entrances, step-free egress, operable windows, automatic doors), supporting ease and independence of use.^{124,126,173}
- b. Developmental and intellectual health, including sensory requirements of people who are neurodiverse: strategies that use color, texture, images and other multi-sensory, visually perceptible information.^{124,173–175}
- c. Wayfinding: strategies that help individuals intuitively navigate through the project (e.g., signage, tactile maps, symbols, auditory cues, information systems, images, color that considers color blindness, various languages).^{173,176}
- d. Policies and programs: strategies that support inclusion and accommodate a diverse range of needs (e.g., diversity and inclusion training, flexible work hours for individuals with disabilities).^{124,126,173}
- e. Technology: technology (e.g., audio and visual equipment, web access, QR codes) that helps individuals fully utilize a space (e.g., remote access to assist blind or deaf individuals, support for those who do not speak the native language), made available to all occupants at no cost.^{124,126,173}
- f. Safety: strategies that support easy access to all spaces and amenities and minimize risk of injury, confusion or discomfort (e.g., lighting or clear sightlines to increase feelings of security, service animals, emergency egress plans with highlighted exit points).^{124,173,174}

ED02 PROVIDE EQUIPPED BATHROOMS | O (MAX: 1 PT)

Intent: Ensure availability of bathrooms and support hygienic hand washing and toilet use practices for all individuals.

Summary: This WELL feature requires bathroom furnishings that accommodate a variety of user needs.

Issue: Something as seemingly simple as using the bathroom can be challenging for some individuals due to their personal needs.^{156,157,177} For example, women often lack necessary bathroom accommodations due to a lack of sufficient sanitary materials.^{156,157} Caregivers, small children and older adults frequently lack access to spaces that provide changing tables or other furnishings that allow them to properly assist the individuals in their care.¹⁵⁶ Family bathrooms can provide essential access to these populations, as well as people with disabilities and individuals who are transgender.^{158,178} Restricting bathroom access for transgender and gender non-conforming individuals in the workplace may cause individuals to avoid using restrooms at work and may lead to poor health outcomes including urinary tract infections and mental health issues.^{159,178}

Solutions: Bathrooms can be designed and furnished to support hygiene, particularly for people who menstruate (e.g., by supplying hygiene products), caregivers of children, and individuals with physical and mental disabilities.^{156,157} Single-user facilities with gender neutral signage make bathrooms available for all individuals.^{160,178}

Part 1 Provide Equipped Bathrooms (Max: 1 Pt)

For All Spaces except Dwelling Units & Guest Rooms:

The project meets the following requirements:

- a. All bathrooms include:
 1. Trash receptacles in stalls (in women's and single-user bathrooms). If toilet paper cannot be flushed down toilets, trash receptacles must be placed in all bathroom stalls such that they do not impede wheelchair/mobility aid access.
 2. Sanitary pads, tampons and/or other menstrual products at no cost or subsidized by at least 50% (in women's and single-user bathrooms).
 3. A hook, shelf or equivalent storage support in each toilet stall. For wheelchair accessible stalls, storage support items are placed no higher than 48 in.
- b. All occupants have access to at least one bathroom per floor that provides a stall that can accommodate a wheelchair user and care attendant.
- c. All occupants have access to at least one bathroom that provides an infant changing table.
- d. All regular occupants may confidentially request a syringe drop box, which is made available at no cost in one or more bathrooms.¹⁷⁹
- e. All single-user bathrooms (if present) are open to all individuals with accompanying signage.
- f. If present, floor drains are equipped with a self-primed liquid-seal trap or a waterless trap seal.¹⁸⁰

For projects where the majority of occupants are visitors (e.g., shopping malls, airports, museums), family bathrooms are provided to meet expected demand by individuals in need of accompaniment or assistance in the bathroom (e.g., children, individuals with mental or physical disabilities) and contain the following amenities:¹⁵⁶

- a. Changing table for infants.
- b. Children's toilet facilities or accommodations for child use of adult-size toilet.
- c. Children's sinks or accommodations for child use of adult-size sink (e.g., availability of stepstool).
- d. Motion sensor lights.
- e. Slip-resistant floors.
- f. Grab bars.
- g. At least one designated location for bags in each stall (e.g., hook, shelf separate from changing table and sink).
- h. Meets the room and stall dimensions required by local code for wheelchair accessibility.

Part 2 Provide Hands-Free Fixtures in Bathrooms (Max: 0 Pt)

For All Spaces except Dwelling Units & Guest Rooms:

All bathrooms meet the following requirements:

- a. Toilets are equipped with hands-free flushing.
- b. Contactless soap dispensers and hand-drying accommodations are provided.
- c. Users can exit the bathroom hands-free.
- d. Faucets meet the following:
 1. Sensor-activated.
 2. Equipped with a programmable line-purge system.
 3. If mixing is used, hot- and cold-water lines are mixed at the point of use.

ED03 PROMOTE NATURE, PLACE AND CULTURE | O (MAX: 1 PT)

Intent: Support occupant well-being by incorporating the natural environment throughout the project and integrating design strategies that celebrate the project's unique identity.

Summary: This WELL feature requires the integration of nature throughout the space, as well as design that celebrates culture and place and inspires human delight.

Issue: Humans are increasingly living in environments where they have insufficient exposure to nature.^{181,182} Natural elements, such as plants and daylight, have been linked with health promoting benefits, including decreased levels of depression and anxiety; increased attentional capacity; better recovery from job stress and illness; increased pain tolerance; and increased psychological well-being.¹⁴²⁻¹⁴⁴ Biophilic soundscapes can support focus, stimulation and relaxation in people who are neurodivergent.¹⁴⁵ The incorporation of plants in the work environment is linked with improved employee morale, job satisfaction, objective and subjective measures of productivity and decreased absenteeism.^{143,183-185} Finally, the presence of water, natural light and nature views can impact mood, memory and performance in the workplace.¹⁸⁶⁻¹⁸⁸ A dose-response relationship has been found with exposure to nature indoors, with studies showing that as contact with nature during the workday increased, perceived job stress, subjective health complaints and sickness decreased.^{144,189,190} Furthermore, establishing connection to place can uncover historical contributions by and celebrate the culture of marginalized communities, such as the LGBTQ+ and communities of color.^{146,147} Design principles that may be especially important to Black communities include spirituality, heritage and uniting indoor and outdoor spaces.^{30,191} Yet, in the United States, communities of color are three times more likely to live in nature-deprived areas as compared to white communities.¹⁹²

Solutions: Incorporating natural elements into buildings can support occupant relief from stress and mental fatigue, as well as help establish a sense of place.¹⁹³ The benefits of nature can be accessed through numerous pathways such as direct (e.g., plants in the office), indirect (e.g., window views) or representational (e.g., photographs) solutions.¹⁴³ Further, incorporating other key aesthetic elements, such as local culture, materials and art can help celebrate the project's unique identity and further enrich the space for occupants and visitors.

Part 1 Provide Connection to Nature (Max: 1 Pt)

For All Spaces except Dwelling Units:

The project integrates the following throughout the space, including common circulation routes, shared seating areas and rooms (e.g., conference rooms, common spaces) and workstations (as applicable):

- a. Natural materials, patterns, shapes, images or sounds.^{186,194}
- b. At least one of the following:
 1. Plants (e.g., potted plants, plant walls).^{186,194}
 2. Water (e.g., fountain).^{186,194}
 3. Nature views.^{186,194}

Part 2 Provide Connection to Place (Max: 0 Pt)

For All Spaces except Dwelling Units:

The project integrates design elements that address the following:

- a. Celebration of culture (e.g., culture of occupants, workplace, surrounding community).¹⁹⁵
- b. Celebration of place (e.g., local architecture, materials, flora, artists).¹⁹⁵
- c. Integration of art.¹⁹⁵
- d. Human delight.¹⁹⁵

ED04 ENHANCE LIGHTING ENVIRONMENT | O (MAX: 1 PT)

Intent: Enhance visual comfort and minimize flicker in electric light.

Summary: This WELL feature requires projects to reduce light flicker and glare to reduce adverse physical and neurological effects.

Issue: Electric light quality and glare control are vital to improving indoor environmental quality. Electric lighting can flicker at low frequencies in ways that are not present in daylight. Across all populations, flicker has been associated with eye strain, headaches, migraines and epileptic seizures.^{196–199} Worldwide, in 2019, migraines accounted for over 10 million disability-adjusted life years (DALYs) in men and almost 17 million DALYs in women.^{200,201} People who are neurodivergent may be overstimulated by light, as they can perceive a flicker and buzz from fluorescent lights that would be imperceptible to people who are neurotypical.¹⁷⁵ Glare, an integral part of lighting design, can also cause negative health impacts and is defined as excessive brightness of the light source, excessive brightness contrast and excessive quantity of light.^{139,140} Glare control is particularly important for people with autism because this population exhibits greater discomfort caused by glare, especially at work, which may even result in the avoidance of buildings with high amounts of glare.¹⁴¹ It is common for people with autism to wear sunglasses indoors to reduce the effects of bright lights and glare.^{202,203} Reducing glare improves the visual experience of all occupants in the space. Glare has been associated with a host of health issues that range from visual discomfort and eye fatigue to headaches and migraines.^{139,204} For people who are neurodivergent and light sensitive, prolonged exposure to bright or flickering lights can cause headaches, distraction and lost productivity.¹³⁸ Studies have also shown that glare can lead to visual impairment and discomfort, which can cause accidents in the workplace.^{205–207} Individuals under the age of 50 are more sensitive to glare.²⁰⁸ Since a substantial section of the workforce falls into this age group, it is important to address glare to avoid visual fatigue and glare-induced headaches.

Solutions: Identifying and utilizing lighting fixtures that emit a high quality of light and do not display signs of flicker contributes to a more comfortable and healthier space. Use and consideration of the type of luminaires and lighting layout can help to reduce glare.

Part 1 Manage Flicker (Max: 1 Pt)

For All Spaces:

All luminaires (except decorative lights, emergency lights and other lighting for signage) and their controls within occupiable spaces meet at least one of the following requirements:

- a. Classified as "reduced flicker operation" per California Title 24, when tested according to the requirements in Joint Appendix JA-10.²⁰⁹
- b. Recommended practices 1, 2 or 3 as defined by IEEE standard 1789-2015 LED.²¹⁰
- c. Pst LM \leq 1.0 and SVM \leq 0.6.

Part 2 Manage Glare from Electric Lighting (Max: 0 Pt)

For All Spaces except Industrial:

All luminaires within regularly occupied spaces (excluding wall wash fixtures, concealed fixtures and decorative fixtures installed as specified by the manufacturer) meet one of the following requirements when measured at light output representative of regular use conditions:

- a. 100% of light is emitted above the horizontal plane.
- b. Classified with Unified Glare Rating (UGR) of 19 or lower.
- c. Luminance that does not exceed 6,000 cd/m² at any angle between 45 and 90 degrees from nadir.

OR

All regularly occupied spaces meet the following requirement:

- a. Classified with Unified Glare Rating (UGR) of 19 or lower.

For Industrial:

All luminaires within regularly occupied spaces (excluding wall wash fixtures, concealed fixtures and decorative fixtures installed as specified by the manufacturer) meet one of the following requirements when measured at light output representative of regular use conditions:

- a. 100% of light is emitted above the horizontal plane.
- b. Classified with Unified Glare Rating (UGR) of 16 or lower.
- c. Luminance that does not exceed 6,000 cd/m² at any angle between 45 and 90 degrees from nadir.

OR

All regularly occupied spaces meet the following requirement:

- a. Unified Glare Rating (UGR) of 19 or lower.

ED05 PROVIDE ERGONOMIC WORKSTATION DESIGN AND CONTROL | O (MAX: 1 PT)

Intent: Reduce the risk of physical strain on the body through ergonomic design at workstations that support neutral body positions for seated and standing work and provide opportunities to alternate between seated and standing positions.

Summary: This WELL feature requires ergonomic workstation furnishings to support all users and orientation for workstations that covers the ergonomic design and adjustability features.

Issue: In 2016, musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) ranked among the top drivers of global disability.^{215,214} MSDs are one of the most commonly reported causes of lost or restricted work time and also contribute to absenteeism and low productivity.^{148,149} Risk factors in the workplace vary by the type of tasks being performed. In environments where manual labor is performed, risk factors include heavy lifting, bending, reaching overhead and pushing or pulling heavy objects.¹⁴⁹ In office settings, risk factors are different but no less prevalent; they include workstation design that forces the body into awkward positions along with other occupational factors that expose the body to prolonged or repetitive tasks.¹⁵⁵ In a 2019 survey from the United Kingdom, 87% of workers who are neurodivergent felt that adjustments at work would enhance their work performance.¹⁵⁰ The results of the survey identified common adjustments requested by people who are neurodivergent typically include adjustments to communications, to physical space and equipment, and social practices within the organization.¹⁵⁰ Adjustable workstations and ergonomic chairs also support individuals with mobility impairments and can better support pregnant women.^{151,152}

Solutions: An ideal ergonomic work environment is conducive to the necessary breadth of tasks assigned to that space while encouraging movement through a variety of positions throughout the day. Effective ergonomic interventions that support all users include both design (e.g., adjustable furniture) and programmatic (e.g., education) approaches.^{215,216} Ergonomic design solutions facilitate customizability at workstations, which allow users to better fit the space to their needs. Studies have demonstrated a return on investment (ROI) for ergonomic interventions. One study from the United States found a return of \$10 USD for every \$1 USD invested.²¹⁷ A different study conducted in the United States that examined the outcomes across 250 case studies, found generally positive results, including a reduction in the number (49.5% across 37 studies) and cost (64.8% across 22 studies) of work-related MSDs and also noted that the payback period was generally less than one year.²¹⁸

Part 1 Support Visual Ergonomics (Max: 1 Pt)

For Office Spaces:

The project meets the following requirements:

- a. Workstations where desktop computers are used provide support for user adjustability (monitor height, viewing angle, horizontal distance) through one of the following:
 1. Monitors with built-in height and angle adjustment.^{219,220}
 2. Monitor stands or arms that allow height, angle and horizontal adjustment.^{219,220}
- b. Workstations where laptops are primarily used provide support for user adjustability through at least one of the following:
 1. An external keyboard, mouse and laptop stand such that the laptop screen can be positioned by the user (screen height, viewing angle, horizontal distance).²²⁰
 2. An external monitor that meets requirement a.²²⁰

Part 2 Provide Height-Adjustable Work Surfaces (Max: 0 Pt)

For Office Spaces:

At least 25% of all workstations can be adjusted by the user for both seated and standing work, through one of the following:

- a. Manual or electric height-adjustable work surfaces that provide users with the ability to customize workstation height at both seated and standing positions.^{219,220}
- b. Supplemental solutions (e.g., stand) that allow all or part of the work surface, monitor and primary input devices (e.g., keyboard, mouse) to be raised or lowered to seated or standing heights.^{219,220}

Part 3 Provide Chair Adjustability (Max: 0 Pt)

For Office Spaces:

All seating at workstations meets the following requirements:

- a. The seat height is adjustable.^{219,220}
- b. One of the following:²¹⁹
 1. The seat pan depth is adjustable.
 2. The seat pan depth is 43 cm [16.9 in] or less.
- c. One of the following:
 1. The backrest and lumbar support is height adjustable.^{219,220}
 2. The backrest angle is adjustable.^{219,220}
 3. The armrest height and distance between armrests are adjustable.^{219,220}

Part 4 Provide Support at Standing Workstations (Max: 0 Pt)

For All Spaces except Commercial Kitchen Spaces:

All workstations in which users are regularly required to stand for 50% or more of their working hours (e.g., assembly line station, hotel check-in counter, supermarket check-out counter) incorporate at least two of the following:

- a. Anti-fatigue mats, impact reducing flooring or a similar strategy.²²¹
- b. Recessed toe space of at least 10 cm depth and height.²²²
- c. A footrest or footrail.^{221,223}
- d. A leaning chair.^{221,223}

OR

The project meets the following requirement:

- a. There are no workstations at which users are regularly required to stand for 50% or more of their working hours.

Part 5 Provide Workstation Orientation (Max: 0 Pt)

For All Spaces:

The project meets the following requirement:

- a. All eligible employees receive an orientation (e.g., in-person training, interactive education, video or smartphone-based education with competency verification) to workstations in the space covering, at a minimum, the following:
 1. Ergonomic and adjustability features of a given workstation and their benefits.
 2. Demonstration on how to make adjustments based on individual needs.
 3. Available resources that can be used for future reference and where to access them.

ED06 PROVIDE ENHANCED ERGONOMICS | O (MAX: 1 PT)

Intent: Enhance well-being and comfort through comprehensive ergonomics programming.

Summary: This WELL feature requires policies that provide ergonomic support and programming for employees working in the project location and remotely.

Issue: Ergonomic issues arise in many spaces, including schools, industrial settings and commercial offices. These issues are unique to each industry and context, each presenting distinctive risks and requiring different considerations.²²⁴ Worldwide, in 2019, ergonomic risk factors were responsible for more than 15 million disability-adjusted life years (DALYs).²²⁵ In a 2019 survey from the United Kingdom, 87% of workers who are neurodivergent felt that adjustments at work would enhance their work performance.¹⁵⁰ Participants reported that increasing accessibility through modifications to the physical space and equipment were among the most preferred solutions.¹⁵⁰ Adjustable workstations and ergonomic chairs improve accessibility for individuals with mobility impairments and pregnant women.^{151,152} Moreover, comprehensive ergonomic programming can increase ability and overall quality of life for employees with physical disabilities.¹⁵³

Solutions: Ergonomic interventions aim to accommodate all individuals and, through a holistic approach, can address the design of the physical environment (e.g., adjustable furniture), the work itself (e.g., process, practices) and behavior (e.g., education, training).^{154,155} Ergonomic interventions have been shown to have a positive impact and a substantial return on investment (ROI). One study from the United States found that after implementing a large-scale ergonomics intervention, claims over a 5-year period were reduced by 45% and researchers determined an ROI of 10:1 for the program.²¹⁷ In this study, ROI calculations considered the compensation costs per claim, the number of preventive ergonomic evaluations performed and the annual cost of the program.²¹⁷ Another study conducted in the United States that examined the outcomes of 250 case studies across a variety of sectors, including healthcare, offices, manufacturing facilities and other industries, found generally positive results and noted that the payback period for an investment in ergonomics was generally less than one year.²¹⁸

Part 1 Implement an Ergonomics Program (Max: 1 Pt)

For All Spaces:

The project or organization meets at least one of the following requirements:

- a. Engages with a qualified professional ergonomist (which may be a consultant, contractor or other third-party).
- b. Has at least one qualified professional ergonomist on staff whose responsibilities include ergonomic programming, as defined in their job description and/or performance expectations.

The project or organization has an ergonomics program that includes the following:

- a. Annual consultation with key stakeholders (e.g., human resources, workplace wellness, occupational safety, leadership, employees) who are involved in the design, implementation and evaluation of the ergonomics program.
- b. A task analyses performed by a qualified professional ergonomist to identify the job-related tasks that are performed by occupants in the space.
- c. Accommodations for eligible employees to receive individual ergonomic assessments in the form of a self-assessment (e.g., reputable, third-party app), in-person assessment (e.g., at the workplace or home) or a virtual assessment (e.g., live video conference). Assessments are offered to employees at least annually and, as applicable, during or after the following events:
 1. Employee on-boarding.
 2. Substantial equipment changes (e.g., purchase of a new chair) or workstation redesign.
 3. Change in health status (e.g., injury, presentation of symptoms of musculoskeletal issues, visual strain).
 4. Change in work environment (e.g., transition to or from full-time remote work).
- d. Ergonomic trainings (e.g., workshop, seminar, classes) delivered by a qualified professional ergonomist to employees at least annually.

Part 2 Support Remote Work Ergonomics (Max: 0 Pt)

For All Spaces:

For organizations with employees who regularly work remotely, the organization tailors the ergonomic program addressed in Part 1 in the following ways:

- a. For individual assessments, accommodations are made to include remote workers (e.g., virtual assessments).
- b. The organization provides ergonomic equipment to support the individual needs of remote workers through direct-purchases, reimbursement or subsidies.

Note:

This feature is a beta strategy and has an additional documentation requirement (beta feature feedback form). The feedback form supports IWBI in developing new features that are effective and applicable to projects around the world.

ED07 IMPLEMENT ACOUSTIC WORK ZONE CONTROL | O (MAX: 1 PT)

Intent: Implement strategies to minimize issues of acoustic disturbance from a variety of sources and improve speech intelligibility and accessibility by providing dedicated, high-performance audio technology.

Summary: This WELL feature requires acoustical zoning plans and workplace policies to manage noise, privacy and comfort.

Issue: Design trends, such as open workspaces, lightweight construction and exposed ceilings and mechanical equipment, can exacerbate noise disturbances and acoustical discomfort.^{226–229} When noise from internal or external sources increases, occupants have been found to be easily distracted, less productive and susceptible to burnout.^{230–234} People who are neurodivergent can be hypersensitive to sound, causing more severe impacts to concentration and overall performance.^{235–237} Privacy and collaboration are both important in the workplace, and people who are neurodiverse may prefer a combination of work environments that support both work styles.^{233,238,239} In one study from the United Kingdom, 99% of employees reported that their concentration was impaired by poor acoustics in the workplace.²³² Similar challenges are reported in workplaces worldwide.^{24,230,233,240,241} One report suggests that office workers are less likely to help others when in high noise conditions, reducing collaboration in the workplace.²³¹ The ability for people to comprehend speech is a fundamental consideration of universal design. Reduced or low speech intelligibility can negatively impact occupant satisfaction and well-being, especially for non-native speakers, individuals with hearing loss or neurodiverse populations.^{127–135} Additionally, increased sound levels can impact task performance, resulting in a higher risk of misunderstanding, operational errors and accidents.²⁴² Improving speech intelligibility can support classroom participation for students who are hard-of-hearing.²⁴³ A supportive classroom environment is associated with increased quality of life, social engagement and mental health.²⁴⁵

Solutions: To support acoustical comfort, spaces should incorporate acoustical design strategies that enable their intended uses.¹³⁶ For example, a typical workplace may need to accommodate various design strategies to address four different use types: concentration, collaboration, socialization and learning.¹³⁷ When planning for acoustical comfort, it is important to consider proximities and adjacencies, since noise from social or collaborative zones could transfer to zones intended for concentration or learning.^{137,244} Each zone can be labeled as loud, quiet or mixed to indicate its associated acoustical impact on surrounding zones. Any facility that incorporates spaces for socialization or recreation in addition to areas for task-centric work or learning can utilize this zoning approach.¹³⁷ Policies that give occupants choice in their environment can provide further benefits. For example, employees with autism may benefit from flexible work arrangements because they can better control their physical environment when working from home; when in the office, accommodations such as noise-canceling headphones or privacy rooms can be helpful.^{245,246} A well-designed and properly implemented audio system can improve speech intelligibility in various environments. Common solutions include teleconferencing equipment in offices.^{247,248} To meet all occupant needs systems should be commissioned by a professional audio engineer.^{249,250}

Part 1 Label Acoustic Zones (Max: 1 Pt)

For All Spaces:

The project provides the following:

- a. A floor plan or other design document showing the following acoustic zones throughout the project:
 1. Loud zone: includes areas intended for loud equipment or activities (e.g., mechanical rooms, AV/IT closets, kitchens, fitness rooms, social spaces, recreational rooms, music rooms).
 2. Quiet zone: includes areas intended for concentration, wellness, rest, study and/or privacy (e.g., restorative spaces, lactation rooms, nap rooms).
 3. Mixed zone: includes areas intended for learning, collaboration and/or presentation (e.g., auditoriums, classrooms, breakout spaces).
 4. Circulation zone: includes occupiable areas not intended for regular occupancy (e.g., hallways, egress, atria, stairs, lobbies).
 5. Not applicable zones: includes other areas without significant sources of sound (e.g., storage rooms, janitor rooms, coat closets) that are not regularly occupied.
- b. A plan for reprogramming or mitigating sound transmission between loud zones that border quiet zones (if any).

Part 2 Prioritize Audio Devices and Policies (Max: 0 Pt)

For All Spaces:

The project or organization supports individual acoustical needs through policies that meet at least three of the following requirements:

- a. All employer-provided audio devices are managed internally by a qualified professional (e.g., IT professional, mobile device manager) and expectations for use are covered in the employee handbook and/or during on-boarding of new staff.^{251,252}
- b. Eligible employees can request alternative working arrangements to accommodate their individual acoustic comfort needs (e.g., option to work remotely, different workstation location).^{253,254}
- c. Signage is used to indicate both the location and intended activities of the quiet and mixed zones. A minimum of one daily quiet hour is scheduled.²⁵⁵
- d. Eligible employees and distance learners (as applicable) are provided speech-enhancing audio devices (e.g., headsets with active digital signal processing or noise-cancellation) upon request and at no cost or subsidized at least 50%.²⁵⁶

ED08 ENHANCE SPEECH INTELLIGIBILITY | O (MAX: 1 PT)

Intent: Improve speech intelligibility and accessibility by providing dedicated, high-performance audio technology.

Summary: This WELL feature requires communication strategies and technology to support enhanced speech intelligibility and accessibility.

Issue: The ability for people to comprehend speech is a fundamental consideration of universal design. Reduced or low speech intelligibility can negatively impact occupant satisfaction and well-being, especially for non-native speakers, individuals with hearing loss or neurodiverse populations.^{127–135} For individuals with autism, auditory processing impairments seem to be more severe for speech versus non-speech stimuli.²⁵⁷ In noisy environments, people with autism who also may have severe language deficits have greater difficulty filtering unimportant sounds from speech.²⁵⁸ When installed and used incorrectly, audio communication equipment can actually decrease speech comprehension.^{127,131,259–262} Additionally, increased sound levels can impact task performance, resulting in a higher risk of misunderstanding, operational errors and accidents.²⁴² In educational settings, teachers who increase vocal effort to overcome poor intelligibility experience more vocal strain, decreased job performance, lower quality of life, as well as higher rates of absence, extended leave and resignation.^{263–268} Improving speech intelligibility can support classroom participation for students who are hard-of-hearing, which can improve quality of life, social engagement and mental health.²⁴³

Solutions: A well-designed and properly implemented audio system can improve speech intelligibility in various environments. These solutions include speech reinforcement systems in classrooms and public address systems.^{247,248} To meet varying occupant needs and create spaces that provide the best possible outcomes for users, systems should be commissioned by a professional audio engineer.^{249,250,269}

Part 1 Part 1 (Max: 1 Pt)

For All Spaces:

The project meets the following requirements, as applicable:

- a. All rooms that are intended for conferencing, distance learning, or hybrid collaboration contain a combination of microphones, speakers, cameras and supportive audio components (e.g., amplifiers, digital signal processors) that are commissioned by a professional audio engineer.
- b. All public address systems used on a daily basis meet the following:
 1. Commissioned by a professional audio engineer in accordance with NFPA 72 (Annex D), BS 5839 Part 8, ISO 7240 Parts 16 and 19 or equivalent²⁷⁰
 2. Achieves a minimum STI 0.50 or CIS 0.75 in at least 50% of regularly occupied acoustically distinguishable spaces (ADS) when measured in accordance with IEC 60268-16 or equivalent and as indicated in a commissioning report, acoustical model or similar.²⁷¹
- c. Speech reinforcement systems are installed in at least 80% of classrooms and all spaces for large presentations (e.g., lecture hall, conference center) and meet the following:
 1. Designed to meet audio distribution requirements in accordance with ANSI/ASA S12.60 Part 1.^{272,273}
 2. Commissioned by a professional acoustician or audio engineer in accordance with ANSI/INFOCOMM A102.01:2017 or equivalent.

ED09 PROVIDE WORKPLACE THERMAL AND LIGHTING CONTROL | O (MAX: 1 PT)

Intent: Provide individuals with the ability to personalize their environment for comfort by making adjustments to thermal and lighting parameters.

Summary: This WELL feature requires pathways for occupants to adjust their personal thermal and lighting environment.

Issue: People spend about 90% of their time indoors and the conditions of indoor environments can have an impact on well-being and productivity.²⁷⁴ Individual perception of thermal comfort is highly variable between different people, so not everyone will be comfortable in the same environmental conditions. This may result from differences in factors such as age, sex, health condition, personal thermal adaptation and thermal history, including climatological origin.^{275–278} Personal temperament and preferences, social and cultural norms and seasonal variation can also play a role in comfort satisfaction levels.^{279,280} In addition, interior lighting may impact mood and cognitive performance.^{281,282} Customizable lighting has been shown to improve satisfaction levels.²⁸³

Solutions: Individual personalization devices allow people to be more in control of their own sensations and comfort levels.^{284–286} Individual thermal control allows for a broader range of acceptability limits for parameters in the thermal environment, including air temperature ranges, which is linked to greater energy savings potential.^{287–289} For example, during warmer months, ambient temperature can be kept at a higher setpoint when individuals can accommodate for their own cooling preferences with localized fans.^{290,291} Developing a lighting environment that not only seeks to satisfy visual acuity and circadian needs but also addresses comfort preferences through customization helps to improve individual productivity, mood and well-being.^{281,282} Supplemental luminaires (such as task lighting) support customization and controllability of light sources. Creating zones with lighting conditions that are distinct from the lighting in regular workspaces can create a comfortable and informal environment that individuals can utilize for social interaction.^{281,292}

Part 1 Provide Personal Cooling Options (Max: 1 Pt)

For All Spaces except Dwelling Units:

The project provides all regular occupants with the ability to cool their individual environment through at least one of the following:²⁹³

- a. A user-adjustable thermostat, which controls the environment for no more than one person and is connected to the building's mechanical cooling system or a more localized air conditioning unit.
- b. A desk, standing, pedestal or ceiling fan that does not increase air speed for other occupants.
- c. Chair with mechanical cooling system.
- d. Any other solution capable of affecting a PMV change of -0.5 within 15 minutes from activation, without changing the PMV for other occupants.

Part 2 Provide Personal Heating Options (Max: 0 Pt)

For All Spaces except Commercial Kitchen Spaces & Dwelling Units:

The project provides all regular occupants with the ability to warm their individual environment through at least one of the following:²⁹³

- a. A user-adjustable thermostat, which controls the environment for no more than one person and is connected to the building's mechanical heating system.
- b. Electric parabolic space heater.
- c. Electric heated chair or footwarmers.
- d. Personal or shared blankets. Shared blankets are washed or disinfected at least weekly after use.
- e. Any other solution capable of affecting a PMV change of +0.5 within 15 minutes from activation, without changing PMV for other occupants.

Part 3 Provide Supplemental Lighting (Max: 0 Pt)

For All Spaces except Dwelling Units & Guest Rooms:

The project meets the following requirements:

- a. Supplemental light fixtures (e.g., task lights) are provided upon request to all employees at no cost and requests are fulfilled within eight weeks.
- b. At least one supplemental light fixture is available for trial purposes.

Supplemental light fixtures meet the following requirements:

- a. Light levels are controllable by occupants, independently from the ambient lighting system.
- b. The location of the light is adjustable by users of the workstation.
- c. Under intended use, the light-emitting element is not visible to users.

ED10 SUPPORT MOVEMENT THROUGH SITE PLANNING | O (MAX: 1 PT)

Intent: Promote movement, physical activity and active living through site design and nearby amenities that facilitate walkability.

Summary: This WELL feature requires walkability, access to pedestrian-friendly amenities and mass transit.

Issue: Over time, nearly every aspect of our built environment has been designed to invite less movement, giving preference to sedentary activities such as sitting and driving.²⁹⁴ A person's opportunity to engage in physical activity is influenced by the design of interior spaces, as well as site-level and neighborhood factors.¹⁶¹⁻¹⁶⁵ At a community scale, the availability of sidewalks, parks and bicycle lanes affects a person's ability to be active.^{166,167} Access to walkable communities varies. Marginalized populations in cities around the world are less likely to live in walkable environments, which can limit physical activity, make it more difficult to travel to work and increase the possibility of injury or death.^{295,296} In the United States, mass transit is more likely to be relied upon by people of color and people who are physically disabled.^{295,297}

Solutions: Thoughtful site planning positively impacts physical activity and active living, and improves nearly every aspect of community health and vitality from social well-being to economic development.¹⁶⁸⁻¹⁷⁰ There is no single metric or recipe that defines a walkable community, as it is influenced by several core design themes: proximity, connectivity, density, safety and aesthetics.²⁹⁸ Walkable communities consider the needs of people with varying abilities and are designed to facilitate mobility across a person's lifespan. In addition, single buildings can make important contributions to the streetscape, activating walkways for pedestrians through pleasing aesthetics on the ground floor.^{299,300}

Part 1 Select Sites with Pedestrian-friendly Streets (Max: 1 Pt)

For All Spaces:

At least one functional building entrance opens to a pedestrian network (i.e., streets where pedestrians travel featuring, at a minimum, sidewalks) and meets at least one of the following requirements:

- a. The project's address achieves a minimum Walk Score® of 70. To utilize this tool, projects must be located in a country that is "supported" by the tool.
- b. Opens onto a street with restricted vehicular traffic.³⁰²
- c. Within a 400 m distance of the project boundary, 90% of the total street length has continuous sidewalks on both sides and two of the following are met:
 1. At least eight existing use types (as defined in Reference in WELL v2) are present.^{303,304}
 2. Speed limits of 40 kmh or less and street has buffer protections along sidewalks (e.g., curb extension, bioswales, bike lane, parked cars, benches, trees, planters).³⁰⁵⁻³⁰⁷
 3. Street segments intersect one another (excluding alleys) at least every 80-100 m.^{303,305}

Exterior building walls facing the pedestrian network incorporate one or more of the following on the first floor or first 5.5 vertical m (whichever is less):

- a. Windows or glazing that provide transparency into the space.^{305,308,309}
- b. Overhangs such as canopies, awnings, eaves or shades.^{305,308,309}
- c. Murals or other artistic installations.^{305,308,309}
- d. Biophilic design elements (e.g., plants, water features, nature patterns, natural building materials).^{305,308,309}
- e. Mixed building textures, colors and/or other design elements.^{305,308,309}

Note:

Interiors projects may count base building amenities toward feature requirements.

Part 2 Select Sites with Access to Mass Transit (Max: 0 Pt)

For All Spaces:

The project meets at least one of the following requirements:

- a. The project's address achieves a minimum Transit Score® of 70.³¹⁰ To utilize this tool, projects must be located in country that is "supported" by the tool.
- b. Is located within a 200 m walk distance of an existing bus network that provides at least 72 weekday trips and 30 weekend trips.³¹⁰
- c. Is located within a 400 m walk distance of existing bus rapid transit stops, light or heavy rail stations, commuter rail stations or ferry services that provide at least 72 weekday trips and 30 weekend trips.³¹⁰

ED11 B PLAN FOR NEURO-INCLUSION | O (MAX: 2 PT)

Intent: Support neuro-inclusion through an informed planning process, multisensory design strategies and stakeholder education.

Summary: This WELL feature requires projects to facilitate a stakeholder charrette with a qualified neuro-inclusion professional, implement multisensory design strategies throughout the project and educate employees on neuro-inclusion.

Issue: More than one billion people, or about 16% of the global population, live with some type of disability, a health condition and/or impairment a person experiences.²⁰ Although many buildings serve people with varying needs and abilities, they are often not designed to accommodate individual requirements.^{5,7} Wayfinding, or knowing how to follow a navigational route, is fundamental for autonomy, social integration and community access for all individuals.⁴ People who are neurodiverse often lack internal spatial representation and awareness, so they find wayfinding to be particularly challenging and mentally straining.⁴ The "fear of getting lost" is the most frequent wayfinding challenge for people with cognitive differences.⁵ As a result, individuals tend to stick to routine or well-known trips to avoid the significant stress associated with navigating new spaces.

Solutions: Due to the complex and nuanced nature of creating multisensory design strategies, it is important for qualified neuro-inclusion professionals and people who are neurodivergent to be engaged throughout the integrated planning and design process.^{2,9} Qualified professionals can help identify and implement evidence-based goals and solutions.² People who are neurodiverse can guide design decisions towards those that will be most important, impactful and supportive based on their lived experience.⁹ Creating spaces for neuro-inclusion also requires the implementation of multisensory design strategies to address individual differences in sensory processing. High-stimulation design strategies support hypo-sensitive individuals who may experience understimulation, while low-stimulation design strategies support hyper-sensitive individuals who may experience overstimulation.^{1,8,12} Individual control, access to nature, as well as acoustic and lighting elements are additional factors that support self-regulation and psychological safety for all individuals, regardless of how people process stimuli.^{7,8,17} In addition, ensuring that multisensory design strategies are sequenced can help provide natural transitions and a balance of sensory spaces throughout.^{11,12,15} Finally, stakeholder education can help communicate the benefits of neuro-inclusive design strategies and policies to all.^{3,4,10}

Part 1 Plan for Neuro-inclusion (Max: 1 Pt)

For All Spaces:

Facilitate a stakeholder charrette that meets the following requirements:^{3,9}

- a. Is hosted early in the WELL planning process (may be part of the stakeholder charrette listed in Feature C02 Part 1).
- b. Involves a qualified neuro-inclusion professional.^{2,7}
- c. Includes efforts to involve representatives from the following stakeholders, as applicable:
 1. Owners.
 2. Organizational representatives who identify as neurodivergent.
 3. Interior design professionals (e.g., interior designer, facilities planner, lighting specialist, acoustics specialist).
 4. Human resources.
 5. Facilities managers.
 6. Architects.
 7. Engineers.
 8. Contractors.
- d. Accommodates participation from relevant stakeholders by addressing barriers (e.g., cultural norms or values, literacy levels, language, disabilities, work schedules, childcare) through timing, location, format and communication strategies.⁹
- e. Defines goals for how the project will support neuro-inclusion through multisensory design strategies.
- f. Identifies a list of credible sources (e.g., interviews, research studies, articles) that support how the identified neuro-inclusion goals may be addressed.
- g. Recommends a set of multisensory design strategies to support neuro-inclusion throughout the project.

Note:

This feature is a beta strategy and has an additional documentation requirement (beta feature feedback form). The feedback form supports IWBI in developing new features that are effective and applicable to projects around the world.

Part 2 Create Spaces for Neuro-inclusion (Max: 1 Pt)

For All Spaces:

Note: Projects may only achieve this part if Part 1 is also achieved.

The following requirement is met:

- a. At least five of the following multisensory design strategies are implemented:
 1. Adjustable environmental factors (e.g., screens, privacy panels, desks, chairs, lighting, temperature, acoustics) that allow people to control their sensory exposure are incorporated throughout.^{6,15,18}
 2. Natural forms, patterns, lines, shapes and objects (e.g., biomorphic, organic, fractal) are incorporated throughout.^{5,17,15}
 3. Environmental cues (e.g., visual, tactile, auditory, sensory maps) that indicate a shift in behavior or activity between spaces are incorporated throughout.^{2,16,19}
 4. Furniture that allows the body to stay in motion while using (e.g., rocking chair, balance boards).¹⁵
 5. Movable furniture that can be relocated without causing noise disruption (e.g., placed on soft floor, includes furniture pads) is incorporated throughout.⁶
 6. Enclosed areas that have interior windows providing clear lines of sight throughout the space are present.^{6,13,15}
 7. Walls that are curved or have rounded corners are present.^{1,13}
 8. Single-loaded corridors (i.e., doors to rooms are located on one side only) are present.^{1,13}
 9. Personal storage for each regular occupant is available.¹⁵
 10. At least two entrances to the building are available, one designed with low-stimulation design strategies and one designed with high-stimulation design strategies.
- b. At least four of the following low-stimulation design strategies are implemented in at least two spaces:
 1. Environmental factors that support visual, auditory and physical privacy.^{5,11,18}
 2. Areas of refuge.^{1,11,19}
 3. Low-intensity colors and patterns.^{1,5,13}
 4. Low-threshold textural experiences (e.g., materials that are smooth or predictable in typography, carpets with low pile).^{1,11,18}
 5. Restorative elements (e.g., biophilic patterns, calming sounds, horizontal lines).^{13,18,19}
 6. Use of intimate scale (e.g., low ceilings, tight spatial layout).^{6,13,19}
 7. Symmetrical organization of spatial layout and design elements.^{1,13}

- c. At least four of the following high-stimulation design strategies are implemented in at least two spaces:
1. Environmental factors that support visual, auditory and physical stimulation.^{13,15,19}
 2. Active and energizing design elements (e.g., natural sounds, low music, accent lighting).^{6,13,19}
 3. High-intensity colors and patterns.^{6,13,19}
 4. High-threshold textural experiences (e.g., materials that are rough or unpredictable in typography, carpets with high pile).^{6,13,19}
 5. Use of open scale (e.g., high ceilings, open spatial layout).^{6,13,19}
 6. Asymmetrical organization of spatial layout and design elements.^{1,13}
- d. Low-stimulation and high-stimulation spaces are distributed according to the following:
1. Interspersed throughout the project boundary.^{1,13}
 2. Incorporated in both work spaces and non-work spaces.

Note: Projects may only achieve this part if Part 1 is also achieved.

The following requirement is met:

- a. A flexible work space policy is in place that allows employees to work in different spaces within the project boundary and throughout the day based on their individual sensory needs.^{6,10,19}

Note:

This feature is a beta strategy and has an additional documentation requirement (beta feature feedback form). The feedback form supports IWBI in developing new features that are effective and applicable to projects around the world.

ED12 B EDUCATE FOR NEURO-INCLUSION | O (MAX: 1 PT)

Intent: Support neuro-inclusion through an informed planning process, multisensory design strategies and stakeholder education.

Summary: This WELL feature requires projects to facilitate a stakeholder charrette with a qualified neuro-inclusion professional, implement multisensory design strategies throughout the project and educate employees on neuro-inclusion.

Issue: Neurodiversity refers to the difference in neurocognitive profiles across an entire population.⁴ It is estimated that 15-20% of the world's population exhibits some form of neurodivergence.⁹ Human brains are unique; therefore, the way people interact with the environment can differ for each person.^{3,5} Neurocognition encompasses a wide range of profiles. This includes neurotypical, which describes someone fitting a majority neurological profile, as well as neurodivergent, which describes someone considered outside a majority or neurotypical neurological profile.^{3,9,20} People who are neurodivergent have unique sensory processing needs and may experience the environment at heightened or lower intensity levels.^{1,2,8} Companies actively hire people who are neurodiverse but few understand how to create supportive spaces for them.^{3,6,20} Traditional design often overlooks the specific needs of people who are neurodivergent as spaces are usually designed for neurotypical users.^{6,15} This leads to environments that are not supportive of people who are neurodivergent, which may hinder their ability to focus, cause anxiety and limit their participation.^{6,10,13} Although research is limited, there is a growing body of knowledge that is informing neuro-inclusive design.

Solutions: Due to the complex and nuanced nature of creating multisensory design strategies, it is important for qualified neuro-inclusion professionals and people who are neurodivergent to be engaged throughout the integrated planning and design process.^{2,9} Qualified professionals can help identify and implement evidence-based goals and solutions.² People who are neurodiverse can guide design decisions towards those that will be most important, impactful and supportive based on their lived experience.⁹ Creating spaces for neuro-inclusion also requires the implementation of multisensory design strategies to address individual differences in sensory processing. High-stimulation design strategies support hypo-sensitive individuals who may experience understimulation, while low-stimulation design strategies support hyper-sensitive individuals who may experience overstimulation.^{1,8,12} Individual control, access to nature, as well as acoustic and lighting elements are additional factors that support self-regulation and psychological safety for all individuals, regardless of how people process stimuli.^{7,8,17} In addition, ensuring that multisensory design strategies are sequenced can help provide natural transitions and a balance of sensory spaces throughout.^{11,12,13} Finally, stakeholder education can help communicate the benefits of neuro-inclusive design strategies and policies to all.^{3,4,10}

Part 1 Educate for Neuro-inclusion (Max: 1 Pt)

For All Spaces:

The project meets the following requirements:

- a. Identifies and communicates the neuro-inclusive design strategies and related policies to employees through at least two of the following:
 1. Virtual tours, available on-demand.
 2. In-person tours, available upon request.
 3. Employee handbook.
 4. Signage throughout the project boundary.

The project offers educational programming that meets the following requirements:

- a. Is provided by a qualified neuro-inclusion professional.
- b. Is offered annually to all employees.
- c. Is offered live, either in-person or virtually.
- d. Covers the following topics:
 1. Overview of the conditions of people who are neurodivergent.
 2. Preferred terms, language and definitions used to describe people who are neurodivergent.
 3. Evidence-based strategies to support and accommodate neuro-inclusion.
 4. Benefits of neuro-inclusive workplaces.
 5. Evidence-based strategies for preventing, identifying and navigating observed or experienced discrimination toward people who are neurodiverse.

Note:

This feature is a beta strategy and has an additional documentation requirement (beta feature feedback form). The feedback form supports IWBI in developing new features that are effective and applicable to projects around the world.

ED13 B SUPPORT INTERIOR NAVIGATION | O (MAX: 1 PT)

Intent: Make spaces more accessible, comfortable and usable for people of all backgrounds and abilities.

Summary: This WELL feature requires projects to integrate recognizable landmarks and amenities along primary circulation routes to support navigation and wayfinding.

Issue: More than one billion people, or about 16% of the global population, live with some type of disability, a health condition and/or impairment a person experiences.²⁰ Although many buildings serve people with varying needs and abilities, many are not designed to accommodate individual requirements.^{5,7} Wayfinding, or knowing how to follow a navigational route, is fundamental for autonomy, social integration and community access for all individuals.⁴ People who are neurodiverse often lack internal spatial representation and awareness, so they find wayfinding to be particularly challenging and mentally straining.⁴ The “fear of getting lost” is the most frequent wayfinding challenge for people with cognitive differences.⁵ As a result, individuals tend to stick to routine or well-known trips to avoid the significant stress associated with navigating new spaces.

Solutions: Universal design addresses multiple aspects of a space, including infrastructure, signage and technologies, and seeks to enhance the opportunity for all individuals to exist independently and comfortably in that space.¹¹ Supportive spaces and places should be designed to effectively accommodate a range of individuals.¹¹ There are several solutions that can enhance universal design for all people and address wayfinding challenges. Easily identifiable landmarks, such as sculptures, artwork and distinct architectural elements, can serve as significant points of reference during the navigational process as they are often memorable.³²

Part 1 Support Inclusive Interior Navigation (Max: 1 Pt)

For All Spaces:

Primary circulation routes meet the following requirements:

- a. Include landmarks (e.g., sculptures, water features, artwork, architectural elements) that are:
 1. Positioned at points-of-decision (e.g., intersections, elevators, stairways and emergency exits).^{21, 22}
 2. Physically prominent and unique (e.g., due to shape, color, size, historical or cultural significance).²¹
- b. Include amenities (e.g., restrooms, quiet areas, drinking water stations, information services) that are:
 1. Within a clear line of sight to another landmark or amenity.²¹
 2. Located consistently throughout the project boundary (e.g., same location on each floor).²¹
- c. Include seating areas that are located consistently throughout the project boundary (e.g., same location on each floor).²¹

Note:

This feature is a beta strategy and has an additional documentation requirement (beta feature feedback form). The feedback form supports IWBI in developing new features that are effective and applicable to projects around the world.

ED14 B SUPPORT BUILDING & NEIGHBORHOOD WAYFINDING | O (MAX: 1 PT)

Intent: Make buildings more accessible, comfortable and usable for people of all backgrounds and abilities.

Summary: This WELL feature requires projects to provide building information in multiple formats as well as maps and directories to help individuals navigate the building and neighborhood.

Issue: More than one billion people, or about 16% of the global population, live with some type of disability, a health condition and/or impairment a person experiences.²⁰ Although many buildings serve people with varying needs and abilities, many are not designed to accommodate individual requirements.^{5,7} Wayfinding, or knowing how to follow a navigational route, is fundamental for autonomy, social integration and community access for all individuals.⁴ People who are neurodiverse often lack internal spatial representation and awareness, so they find wayfinding to be particularly challenging and mentally straining.⁴ The "fear of getting lost" is the most frequent wayfinding challenge for people with cognitive differences.⁵ As a result, individuals tend to stick to routine or well-known trips to avoid the significant stress associated with navigating new spaces.

Solutions: Universal design addresses multiple aspects of a space, including infrastructure, signage and technologies, and seeks to enhance the opportunity for all individuals to exist independently and comfortably in that space.¹¹ Supportive spaces and places should be designed to effectively accommodate a diverse range of individuals.¹¹ There are several solutions that can enhance universal design for all people and address wayfinding challenges. Printed and digital signage provides important information for navigation as well as at points for decision-making.² Simple and user-friendly sitemaps that are strategically positioned at key locations throughout a building, including entrances, can quickly help individuals orient and move throughout a space.¹¹ Moreover, electronic maps can allow individuals to preview routes before engaging in travel.^{7, 22} This format is especially helpful for people who are neurodivergent as it provides individuals with greater control and the ability to choose how they navigate the environment.²² Lastly, providing wayfinding information in various formats that support a range of cultures and abilities (e.g., braille, different languages) enhances access, allowing all individuals to more easily navigate spaces.¹¹

Part 1 β Support Inclusive Building & Neighborhood Wayfinding (Max: 1 Pt)

For All Spaces:

Information is provided for the building in a way that meets the following requirements:

- a. Is displayed in a physical format (e.g., printed signage, digital display) at the main building entrance and at least one additional functional building entrance, if present.
- b. Is available in an electronic format (e.g., website, mobile application).
- c. All formats meet the following:
 1. Include audio and/or braille that is compliant with ICC/ANSI A117.1-2003.
 2. Use clear and simple language.⁹
 3. Include more than one language.⁹
 4. Include contact information for assistance services (e.g., screen readers, listening systems, wayfinding apps).
- d. All formats include a **local amenities directory** that meets the following:
 1. Displays the location of at least 8 existing use types (as defined in Appendix V1) relative to the building.
 2. Displays the location of all public transit stops located within a 400 m [0.25 mi] walk distance of the main building entrance, if present.
- e. If multiple businesses are present, all formats include a **business directory** that shows the names of businesses located within the building and their locations (e.g., floor level, room number).
- f. All formats include a **site map** of the building that shows the following, if present, using easily recognizable symbols:
 1. Bathrooms.
 2. Drinking water stations.
 3. Information services.
 4. Areas for resting or sitting.
 5. Wayfinding landmarks.²¹
 6. Accessible pathways.²²
 7. Emergency exits.
- g. All formats include a sensory map of the building that shows the following, if present, using easily recognizable symbols:^{9,22}
 1. Restorative spaces.
 2. Loud sounds.
 3. Crowded spaces.
 4. Flashing lights.
 5. Strong smells.

Note:

This feature is a beta strategy and has an additional documentation requirement (beta feature feedback form). The feedback form supports IWBI in developing new features that are effective and applicable to projects around the world.

HEALTH BENEFITS AND SERVICES (EB)

The Health Benefits and Services action area aims to drive organizational stability and employee retention through a variety of supportive benefits and services.

Promoting community well-being must begin with supporting the fundamental factors that influence individual and collective health. Healthcare access is one of five key pillars that make up the social determinants of health.³¹¹ It addresses physical or geographic access, affordability and quality or acceptability of care.^{311–315} Healthcare access can vary based on gender identity, sexual orientation, race and ethnicity, age, socioeconomic background, disability, neurological development and location.^{311–314,316} Furthermore, having access to expanded healthcare services can improve the physical, social and mental health of individuals and communities.^{312,317}

A core component of a supportive work environment includes the provision of paid sick leave. While 94% of the countries within the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) mandate paid sick leave, the United States and South Korea are the only countries that do not.^{318,319} Studies show that implementing paid sick leave reduces the spread of contagious disease in the workplace, improves employee productivity and reduces employee turnover.^{320–324} Organizations can also support employees by establishing healthy working hour and offering flexibility to support well-being. Yet, nearly 9% of the global population work more than 55 hours per week, and the practice of overwork reduces access of primary caregivers to higher-paid jobs due to disproportionate family care responsibilities.^{325,326}

Millions of individuals take on the role of caregiver for their children, dependents and family members, and this number will continue to rise with the rapidly growing population of older adults.^{327,328} An international survey addressing caregivers in Australia, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, the United Kingdom and the United States found that over 20% of participants had to reduce their work hours to accommodate caregiving responsibilities.³²⁹ By doing so, they believed that their careers were negatively impacted.³²⁹ Employers have the opportunity to support caregivers, and thereby improve staff retention, morale, and engagement and reduce stress, sick leave and absenteeism.^{328,330} For working parents who have to find childcare, school breaks and closures can be especially stressful and expensive.³³¹ By offering a range of accommodations, employers can create a supportive culture that meets the needs of caregiving employees.³³² Additionally, supporting employees during times of loss and grief by offering grief counseling and time away from work to grieve can reduce employee anxiety, depression and increased health risks over time.^{333,334}

Access to support and treatment options for mental health conditions varies globally with marginalized populations such as LGBTQ+ and communities of color facing disproportionate barriers to accessing essential services.³³⁵ Access to screening and mental health services can help encourage the utilization of services, support early diagnosis and help reduce poor mental health outcomes.³³⁶

Likewise, systemic discrimination of marginalized populations and the resulting disparities in access to economic, social and educational support have kept specific populations from advancing in their careers.^{337,338} The resulting economic and education gaps limit gainful employment and financial stability. Supportive organizations foster greater employee satisfaction and retention through the development of programs for educational attainment and implementation of mentorship and sponsorship opportunities to support an employee's financial stability.³³⁹

Lastly, domestic violence is often not considered in the context of the role of organizations, despite being the most common form of gender-based violence in the world.³⁴⁰ Research shows that at work, victims of domestic violence are more likely to have reduced performance and increased absenteeism and turnover.^{341,342} Employers can play a role in helping to reduce the physical and mental impacts of domestic violence by establishing policies and providing resources to support victims and educate employees.^{343,344}

EB01 PROMOTE HEALTH BENEFITS | O (MAX: 1 PT)

Intent: Support the overall health and well-being of individuals and their families by offering health benefits, policies and services.

Summary: This WELL feature requires the provision of essential health services.

Issue: Access to basic healthcare services is one of five key pillars that make up the social determinants of health.³¹¹ Systemic racism and other biases, such as those based on sexual orientation and physical disability, are barriers to healthcare access.^{125,345-347} According to the World Health Organization (WHO), people who are disabled are three times more likely to be denied healthcare and 50% more likely to experience health expenditure needs in excess of their ability to pay.³⁴⁸ For people who are neurodivergent, cost, communication challenges and stigma have been identified as significant barriers to accessing care.^{315,349} The LGBTQ+ population also faces difficulty in accessing healthcare due to discrimination and can experience health challenges at higher rates than the general population.³⁴⁶ For example, asthma, osteoarthritis, cardiovascular disease and HIV/AIDS are more common in this population.³⁴⁶ Overall, easier access to and support in navigating health insurance policies and benefits provides increased usage and satisfaction with services, especially for marginalized populations.^{350,351} In many instances, organizations that offer such support garner greater retention and overall performance.^{350,351}

Solutions: Medical care must be highly individualized and holistic to provide the greatest benefit. Still, there are several broad approaches to expanding health services which can lead to more affordable and comprehensive coverage, reduced health disparities and organizational benefits.³⁵⁰ Basic essential healthcare services include medical, dental, vision, mental health, substance use, preventive screenings, disease management and biometric assessments.³¹⁷ Studies demonstrate that, when offered, an overwhelming majority of employees seek one-on-one benefits consultations and flexible coverage options so they can opt into coverage that best meets their individual schedule and health needs.³⁵² To ensure the utilization of healthcare services across marginalized populations and for all employees, it is important to provide support in interpreting and navigating health benefits.^{350,351}

Part 1 Part 1 (Max: 1 Pt)

For All Spaces:

A health benefits policy meets the following requirements:

- a. Is available to all eligible employees and their designated dependents (e.g., spouse, domestic partner, child) at no cost or subsidized that includes the following services:
 1. Medical care.
 2. Dental care.
 3. Vision care.
 4. Sexual and reproductive health services, including obstetrics and gynecology (OB-GYN) services and sexually transmitted infection (STI) testing and treatment.
 5. Medication/prescription coverage.
 6. Essential immunizations, as determined based on region.
 7. Preventive screenings and biometric assessments.
 8. Tobacco cessation programs.
 9. Infectious disease testing (e.g., tuberculosis, malaria, COVID-19) during a regional or global infectious disease outbreak, epidemic or pandemic as declared by a regional or global public health agency (e.g., WHO, disease control and prevention centers or equivalent).
- b. Confidential benefits consultations are available with clearly identified and qualified support staff (e.g., benefits counselor, human resources representative).

EB02 PROVIDE ENHANCED HEALTH BENEFITS | O (MAX: 1 PT)

Intent: Support the overall health and well-being of individuals and their families by offering comprehensive health benefits, policies and services.

Summary: This WELL feature requires access to expanded health benefits.

Issue: Medical services not covered by health benefits can be costly; noncoverage of certain medical services may exacerbate health disparities between groups.^{353–355} Many employer-based healthcare plans either exclude or only partially cover medical care related to reproductive health (e.g., doulas, fertility, comprehensive abortion care), gender transition, complementary and integrative healthcare, and non-emergency medical transportation.^{353,356–358} Given the cost, these exclusions may be detrimental to an individual's health and well-being, reinforcing a lack of access and, in some cases, reinforce unfair treatment of affected populations.^{353,359,360} For example, when it comes to integrative healthcare services in the United States, only 32% of major insurance firms cover acupuncture and just 17% cover massage therapy.³⁵⁸ Coverage for certain medical services also varies around the world. Access to in vitro fertilization (IVF) is typically fully or partially covered in Belgium, Denmark and Sweden, while IVF is often not covered by insurance in the United States.³⁶¹

Solutions: Medical care is highly individualized and requires a holistic approach to provide the greatest benefit. Still, there are several broad approaches to expanding health services which can lead to more affordable and comprehensive coverage and reduced health disparities and benefiting the organizations.³⁵⁰ One survey from the United States found that 60% of employers providing comprehensive health coverage for transgender employees reported it made their organization more competitive and improved recruitment and retention rates.³⁶² As another example, birth support workers (such as doulas) can improve outcomes before, during and after pregnancy, especially for populations that have been historically racially or ethnically minoritized by providing physical, emotional and partner support.^{363,364} Doulas have the ability to improve birth outcomes by acting as patient advocates for all birthing parents, and particularly birthing parents from marginalized populations.^{363,364} Overall, providing employees with expanded healthcare services can help improve the physical, social and mental health of individuals as well as their communities and the organizations for which they work.³¹⁷

Part 1 Part 1 (Max: 1 Pt)

For All Spaces:

A health benefits policy is available for all eligible employees and their designated dependents (e.g., spouse, domestic partner, child) at no cost or subsidized. Health services must include at least four of the following:

- a. Nutrition support and services (e.g., medical nutrition therapy including nutrition supplements and enteral nutrition).²²⁻²⁴
- b. Complementary and integrative healthcare services (e.g., herbal therapy, mind and body practices such as acupuncture, massage, yoga, aquatic therapy).
- c. Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT) that includes reimbursable transportation both to and from medical appointments, utilizing a form of transportation that meets the medical needs of the individual and covering all associated expenses.²⁵
- d. Elder care, including home health care.
- e. Fertility Services (e.g., in vitro fertilization, iatrogenic infertility).
- f. Doulas or other birth support workers.
- g. Comprehensive Abortion Care (CAC).
- h. Gender-affirming care including, at a minimum, hormone therapy and surgery.

Note:

This feature is a beta strategy and has an additional documentation requirement (beta feature feedback form). The feedback form supports IWBI in developing new features that are effective and applicable to projects around the world.

EB03 OFFER ON-DEMAND HEALTH SERVICES | O (MAX: 1 PT)

Intent: Support the overall health and well-being of individuals and their families by offering comprehensive health benefits, policies and services.

Summary: This WELL feature requires access to on-demand health services.

Issue: Healthcare access is one of five domains that make up the social determinants of health.³⁴⁴ Within the European Union in 2016, one million deaths were preventable for people under 75 years old.³⁶⁸ In the United States, only 8% of adults over the age of 35 received the recommended preventative health services in 2015.³⁶⁹ One major barrier to receiving necessary healthcare is transportation.³⁷⁰ Worldwide, over 600 million people live in locations where it takes more than an hour to drive to a healthcare facility and over three billion people live in locations where it takes more than an hour to walk to a healthcare facility.³⁷¹ Growing evidence supports that communities of color, immigrant populations and people who are disabled are disproportionately affected by transportation barriers.³⁷²⁻³⁷⁵ Transportation barriers can lead to interrupted care delivery, missing or incorrectly using medications, increased emergency department use and other poor health outcomes.³⁷⁴ Additionally, delays between identifying a need for care and receiving services can increase costs as well as rates of complications and hospitalization.^{317,376}

Solutions: Providing easily on-demand health services can relieve both actual and perceived barriers to receiving care.^{317,377} Offering onsite, nearby or virtual medical services can reduce transportation barriers and increase access to healthcare.^{378,379}

Part 1 Part 1 (Max: 1 Pt)

For All Spaces:

A health benefits policy is available for all eligible employees that provides health services at no cost or subsidized, on-site and in-person within 400 m of the project boundary or through a telemedicine provider or digital health platform. The health services program meets the following requirements:

- a. Experienced and qualified healthcare providers (e.g., physician, nurse practitioner, physician assistant) are available to provide confidential medical treatment for episodic, recurrent, urgent or other illnesses before, during and/or after regular business hours.
- b. A scheduling system that allows drop-ins and/or appointment booking.
- c. Eligible employees are permitted to use services during the workday if appointments are only available during regular business hours.

EB04 OFFER SICK LEAVE AND FLEXIBLE WORK | O (MAX: 1 PT)

Intent: Support the overall health and well-being of individuals and their families by offering comprehensive health benefits, policies and services.

Summary: This WELL feature requires paid sick leave and other accommodations to support positive health outcomes.

Issue: Wages are often not sufficiently covered when employees take time off to recover for sickness or injury.³²⁰ While 94% of the countries within the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) mandate some amount of paid sick leave, the United States and South Korea are the only countries that do not mandate any leave.^{318,319} Studies estimate that 20 million Americans and 37% of employees in the United Kingdom go to work sick because they lack sufficient sick leave, infecting colleagues as a result.^{320,321} One study from the United States estimated that only 46% of Hispanic workers have access to paid sick leave compared to 63% of white workers and 62% of Black workers.³⁸⁰ Moreover, flexible work can benefit vulnerable populations. A study from Australia found that people with disabilities are denied flexible work arrangements more frequently than those without disabilities, yet have more positive experiences when offered flexible work options.³⁸¹

Solutions: Studies show that implementing paid sick leave reduces contagions in the workplace, improves employee productivity and reduces employee turnover.³²⁰⁻³²⁴ Also, workplace health policies that provide flexible work options offer numerous benefits to employees, including support in navigating mental health challenges.^{382,383} Increased flexibility at work can also reduce financial stress for working mothers by diminishing the wage gap between them and women without children.³⁸⁴ Enhanced social support and adjustments to the work environment can also help enable a successful return for employees coming back from leave following a mental health challenge.^{385,386}

Part 1 Offer Sick Leave (Max: 1 Pt)

For All Spaces:

A sick leave policy that meets the following requirements is available to all eligible employees:

- a. Leave is offered upfront or accrued for use during any 12-month period for any health condition and meets one of the following requirements:
 1. Short-term sick leave for all eligible employees, distinct from paid time off and family leave, at least 10 days of which are paid at 50% or higher of the employee's full salary or wages.
 2. At least 20 days of combined paid time off and sick leave, which are paid at 50% or higher of the employee's full salary or wages. Projects using a blended policy are not eligible to pursue Feature EB5: Support Equitable Working Hours.
- b. Statement that discourages employees from coming into work when they feel sick and from doing work while on sick leave.
- c. At least one of the following:
 1. At least 12 weeks of sick leave (which may be unpaid) during any 12-month period for a chronic or serious health condition that involves inpatient care in a hospice or residential healthcare facility (e.g., stroke, infectious disease, surgery) or a health condition that requires continuing treatment and/or supervision by a healthcare provider (e.g., diabetes, asthma, cancer).
 2. Part-time options, flexible schedules or permission to work from home when recovering from serious health conditions.

Part 2 Offer Employee Mental Health Support (Max: 0 Pt)

For All Spaces:

The project or organization has a mental health policy and the benefits within are made available to all employees without a need to disclose the underlying health reason. The mental health policy meets the following requirements:

- a. Sick leave may be used for mental health needs (e.g., appointments).³⁸⁶⁻³⁸⁸
- b. Short- or long-term leave may be used for mental health needs, with the option of a phased integration back to work after returning from leave.^{388,389}
- c. Increased interpersonal support (e.g., manager support with prioritizing and managing workloads, increased frequency of one-on-one check-ins).³⁸⁶
- d. Adjustment of work schedule to support mental health needs (e.g., appointments, start/end times).³⁸⁶⁻³⁸⁸
- e. Adjustment of the workplace to support mental health (e.g., moving a workstation to a busier or a quieter area, providing a quiet space for breaks, providing earplugs or headphones, increasing personal space, providing the ability to work from home).³⁸⁶⁻³⁸⁸

EB05 SUPPORT HEALTHY WORKING HOURS | O (MAX: 1 PT)

Intent: Support employee well-being by providing opportunities for recovery and restoration within and outside the workplace.

Summary: This WELL feature requires sufficient time off to support recovery, restoration and a healthy work-life balance.

Issue: Nearly 9% of the global population work 55 or more hours per week.³²⁵ The demand to work long hours reduces access to higher paying jobs for primary caregivers due to their disproportionate family care responsibilities.³²⁶ In the retail and food-service industries, employees of color are more likely to experience unstable work schedules.³⁹⁰ This gap, at 18% in the United States, is greatest among women of color.³⁹⁰ Both long working hours and insufficient opportunities for recovery are associated with numerous adverse outcomes, including cardiovascular and immunologic issues and reduced sleep quality and duration.³⁸⁸ Long hours are also associated with an increased risk for stress, burnout, excessive alcohol use and poor diet.^{388,391} Studies from the European Union, Japan and the United States indicate that productivity decreases as the number of hours worked crosses a maximum threshold.^{392–397} While this maximum continues to be debated, evidence of this inverse relationship grows. For example, United Kingdom workers average about 42 hours per week, at least four working hours more than people in Denmark, yet their productivity is nearly 24% lower.³⁹² Long hours are also connected to decreased employee creativity and morale.^{388,398} For secondary school students, later school start times are linked to longer sleep duration, reduced substance use and overall improved health.^{399–401} Schools with later start times have reported less absenteeism and tardiness, as well as higher test scores.⁴⁰⁰

Solutions: Employees need sufficient opportunities to psychologically detach and recover during non-work hours, such as in the evenings, on weekends and during vacations.⁴⁰² Findings indicate that mentally distancing oneself from work and engaging in restorative activities on a day-to-day basis is linked to employee well-being, including higher life satisfaction and mood, maintained performance, lower burnout and fewer health complaints.⁴⁰² Targeted interventions, such as limits on working hours and schedule, can help individuals achieve sufficient and high-quality sleep.^{403,404} Research indicates that regular vacations may have a protective effect against chronic work stress by providing a sustained period of relief from daily stressors, demands and routines.^{405,406}

Part 1 Part 1 (Max: 1 Pt)

For All Spaces:

The project or organization has a policy on schedules and time off that meets the following requirements:

- a. For all employees:
 1. A minimum of 11 consecutive hours off from work is available per 24-hour period.^{74,407}
 2. A minimum of 24 consecutive hours off from work is available per 7-day period.⁷⁴
 3. Employees who engage in shift work are provided a minimum 48-hour advance notice of shift changes.
- b. For all eligible employees:
 1. A minimum of 20 days of paid time off per calendar year (not including paid sick days or government-recognized paid holidays)⁷⁴
 2. Work and work-related communications are not required during paid time off.⁴⁰²
 3. Sick, vacation, floating holiday, personal and all other employer-provided days off from work are clearly defined.
 4. Accrual policy is defined, including whether rollover days are allowed and date by which rollover days must be used.
- c. For students in secondary schools (if applicable), the school day starts no earlier than 8:30 a.m.⁴⁰⁸

EB06 OFFER CHILDCARE SUPPORT | O (MAX: 1 PT)

Intent: Support working parents and caregivers so they can properly care for family members.

Summary: This WELL feature requires policies and programs that facilitate childcare.

Issue: Millions of working individuals take on the role of caregiver for their children, dependents and family members³²⁸ With the rapidly growing population of older adults, the number of working caregivers will continue to rise.³²⁷ An international survey addressing caregivers in Australia, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, the United Kingdom and the United States found that over 20% of participants had to reduce their work hours to accommodate caregiving responsibilities.³²⁹ By doing so, they believed that their careers were negatively impacted.³²⁹ When companies fail to meet the needs of caregivers, they experience higher rates of absenteeism, workday interruptions and unpaid leave, resulting in an annual average loss of 3.4 billion, 2.8 billion and 1.4 billion US dollars, respectively.⁴⁰⁹ School breaks and closures can be especially stressful and expensive for working parents who have to find childcare.³³¹ The need to balance finances with loss of wages from taking unpaid parental leave causes many people, particularly those with low household income, to take on debt or cut their leave short.^{409,332}

Solutions: Employers have the opportunity to support caregivers, and thereby improve staff retention, morale, and engagement and reduce stress, sick leave and absenteeism.^{328,330} On-site childcare centers can help working parents balance family needs with work demands. Flexible work arrangements for caregivers can help retain and attract employees while also improving overall productivity and engagement.³³² Additionally, financial assistance, support groups and referrals to community services can help individuals manage the unique challenges associated with being a caregiver.⁴⁸

Part 1 Part 1 (Max: 1 Pt)

For All Spaces:

At least three of the following are provided for all employees:

- a. On-site childcare centers compliant with local childcare licensure regulations, or subsidies of at least 50% for off-site or at-home childcare.⁴¹⁰
- b. Back-up childcare coverage (e.g., drop-in daycare, overnight childcare, in-home babysitting service, virtual childcare service) in case of unexpected events (e.g., family emergency, school closure) at no cost or subsidized by at least 50%.⁴¹¹
- c. School break childcare programs (e.g., center- or home-based care during school break or winter holidays)⁴¹¹ at no cost or subsidized by at least 50%.
- d. Policy allowing the use of paid sick leave, family leave or personal days for the care of a child.
- e. Policy allowing at least one of the following to support all employees with children:
 1. Part-time options.
 2. Work from home flexibility.
 3. Flexible schedules.⁴⁸

EB07 OFFER NEW PARENT LEAVE AND SUPPORT | O (MAX: 3 PT)

Intent: Provide support for new parents to care for themselves and their children.

Summary: This WELL feature requires paid parental leave for primary and non-primary caregivers and supportive resources for parents returning to work.

Issue: Maintaining an infant's health before birth and during its first months of life is crucial to the child's long-term health.⁴¹² While most countries guarantee a minimum amount of paid maternity leave, many do not offer paid partner leave and, when they do, it is often significantly shorter in duration than maternity leave.⁴¹³ Additionally, shorter and/or unpaid maternity leave may create barriers to accessing necessary health services such as postpartum healthcare, which is critical to receive within the first six weeks after childbirth to support the health of the new mother.⁴¹⁴ The International Labor Organization (ILO) recommends a minimum of 18 weeks of parental leave, with research indicating that 40 weeks of paid leave results in the greatest overall reduction of risk for low infant birth weight and infant mortality and results in higher rates of on-time infant immunizations.^{412,415,416} Longer parental leave is also associated with greater achievements for children in the long-term, including reduced school drop-out rates and increased medical appointment attendance.^{415,417-421} Moreover, research shows that parental leave of up to a year (52 weeks) can help improve job continuity for women for several years after childbirth.^{422,423} Research also demonstrates that fathers who take at least two weeks of paid leave are far more engaged in childcare even nine months after birth.⁴²⁴ Organizational support for new parents can also increase employee retention and company loyalty.⁴²⁵

Solutions: Sufficient, paid parental leave that aligns with current research and back-to-work coaching programs are associated with numerous health benefits such as reduced rates of mortality and low birthweight for infants, higher rates of breastfeeding, decreased rates of postpartum depression and a higher likelihood for both parents to be involved.^{415,417-421}

Part 1 Part 1 (Max: 3 Pt)

For All Spaces:

A parental leave policy that meets the following requirements is available for all eligible employees:

- At least 40 weeks of parental leave is offered to the designated birthing parent and/or primary care giver.^{415,426} Of this, at least a portion must be paid at 75% or higher of the employee's full salary or wages and include benefits, per the table below.⁴²⁶
- Parental leave is offered to the non-primary caregiver, of which at least a portion is paid at 75% or higher of the employee's full salary or wages and including benefits, per the table below.^{424,427}
- Leave must be separate from other types of leave (e.g., sick leave, paid time off) and may be used consecutively or non-consecutively during any 12-month period during pregnancy or after birth or adoption.

Tier	Weeks of Paid Leave for the Birthing Parent and/or Primary Caregiver		Weeks of Paid Leave for Non-Primary Caregiver	Point Value
1	At least 12 weeks	AND	At least 2 weeks	1 point
2	At least 18 weeks ^{410,416}	AND	At least 3 weeks	2 points
3	At least 30 weeks ^{415,422}	AND	At least 4 weeks	3 points

The project or organization offers a policy that provides at least two of the following services to help employees utilize and return from parental leave.^{415,417-420}

- At least one of the following upon returning from parental leave:
 - Part-time options (e.g., ramp back programs).
 - Work from home flexibility.
 - Flexible schedules.
- Communications (e.g., emails, modules, trainings) sent to expecting parents about the parental leave policies and resources, including guidance on the positive health impacts of parental leave.
- Coaching or counseling program, or other resources to help employees transition when returning from parental leave.
- Training for managers on how to work with employees to create a plan for parental leave and optimally support employees returning from parental leave.

EB08 SUPPORT FAMILY LEAVE | O (MAX: 1 PT)

Intent: Support working parents and caregivers so that they can provide ample care for their family members.

Summary: This WELL feature requires policies and programs that support leave related to bereavement and other family needs.

Issue: Millions of working individuals take on the role of caregiver for their children, dependents and family members.³²⁸ With the rapidly growing population of older adults, the number of working caregivers will continue to rise.³²⁷ In response to their caregiving responsibilities, caregivers adjust their work schedules or take time off more often than other employees.⁴²⁸ When companies fail to meet the needs of caregivers, they experience higher rates of absenteeism, workday interruptions and unpaid leave, resulting in an annual average loss of 3.4 billion, 2.8 billion and 1.4 billion US dollars, respectively.⁴⁰⁹ In 2020, research from the United States found that the need to balance caregiving responsibilities with work obligations caused an estimated 14% of caregivers to take a leave of absence and 6% gave up working entirely.⁴²⁹ Moreover, the loss of a loved one has been associated with higher risks for mortality.^{333,430} Bereaved individuals may also experience greater rates of physical health problems, leading to disability, hospitalization and psychological stress such as insomnia, depression and anxiety.^{333,430} Yet, many people do not have a legal right to adequate bereavement leave; countries in Europe and Asia, as well as Australia and New Zealand, offer five or fewer paid bereavement days; Canada affords two unpaid days of leave; and the United States does not mandate any leave.⁴³¹ Grief is also tied to productivity loss; a seminal study from 2003 conducted in the United States showed that grief-inducing experiences cost employers an annual average of \$75 billion USD in lost business.⁴³²

Solutions: By offering flexibility to caregivers, employers can create a supportive culture that meets the needs and responsibilities of employees, helping to retain and attract employees while also improving overall productivity and engagement.³³² Additionally, financial assistance, support groups and referral to community services can help individuals manage the unique challenges associated with being a caregiver.⁴⁸ Providing employees with sufficient bereavement leave, grief counseling and other support can help employees manage grief and mitigate anxiety, depression and other health risks over time.^{333,334}

Part 1 Offer Family Leave (Max: 1 Pt)

For All Spaces:

The project or organization makes a family leave policy available to all eligible employees that meets the following requirements:

- a. At least 12 weeks of leave during any 12-month period, paid at 75% or higher of the employee's full salary or wages, for the care of a spouse, domestic partner, child, dependent, parent, parent-in-law, grandparent, grandchild, sibling or other designated relation with a chronic or long-term serious health condition (including an illness, injury, impairment or physical or mental health condition) that involves one of the following:⁴³³
 1. Inpatient care in a hospital, hospice or residential healthcare facility for conditions such as stroke, infectious disease or PTSD.
 2. Continuing treatment and/or supervision by a healthcare provider for conditions such as diabetes, asthma or cancer.
- b. The option to use paid sick leave or personal days for the care of a spouse, domestic partner, child, dependent, parent, parent-in-law, grandparent, grandchild or sibling.
- c. At least one of the following for the care of a spouse, domestic partner, child, dependent, parent, parent-in-law, grandparent, grandchild, sibling or other designated relation:
 1. Part-time options.
 2. Work from home flexibility.
 3. Flexible schedules.

Part 2 Offer Bereavement Support (Max: 0 Pt)

For All Spaces:

A bereavement policy is available to all eligible employees that includes the following requirements:

- a. Protocol for notifying supervisors of the loss.
- b. Bereavement leave that includes:
 1. At least five days of paid leave during any 12-month period for the loss of a child (including miscarriages and stillbirths), spouse, parent or dependent.^{434,435}
 2. At least three days of leave, paid at 75% or higher of the employee's full salary or wages, during any 12-month period for the loss of a family member, colleague or friend.^{434,435}
 3. Additional unpaid leave for any of the above losses during any 12-month period, granting employees a minimum of 20 days of leave to use at any point in the bereavement process. The days of paid leave may be counted toward the 20 days.
- c. Bereavement support resources, covering:
 1. Coping with grief.
 2. Returning to work after a loss.^{334,436}
 3. Accessing local bereavement support services.^{334,436,437}
- d. Coverage for bereavement counseling services at no cost or subsidized by at least 50%.

EB09 PROVIDE MENTAL HEALTH SCREENING AND SERVICES | O (MAX: 1 PT)

Intent: To increase awareness of and offer support to people who are living with mental health conditions.

Summary: This WELL feature requires programs and resources that support mental health.

Issue: Obtaining appropriate treatment for mental health conditions remains challenging around the globe. It is estimated that 76-85% of people in low- and middle-income countries and 30-50% in high-income countries receive no treatment for mental health conditions.^{438,439} When care is received, it is often of poor quality.^{438,439} In one report from the United States, LGBTQ+ individuals were found to experience more mental health symptoms than non-LGBTQ+ individuals.³³⁵ The same study reported 80% of transgender respondents identified work or workplaces as contributing to mental health conditions.³³⁵ Additionally, it found that 47% of Black or African American and 47% of Hispanic respondents reported leaving a job for mental health reasons.³³⁵ In 2018, nearly 33% of adults with disabilities in the United States reported frequent mental distress.⁴⁴⁰ Compared to other illnesses, treatment of mental health conditions is often delayed.^{441,442} Many factors contribute to this gap including lack of healthcare coverage and services for mental health conditions, rates of substance abuse and addiction in individuals experiencing mental health conditions, as well as the stigma and lack of overall awareness around mental health conditions.^{336,443} This has major consequences: people in the United States living with mental health conditions are overall less likely to receive high quality medical care and preventive health services (e.g., immunizations, cancer screening).⁴⁴⁴⁻⁴⁴⁷ They also miss an average of 4.8 workdays and experience 11.5 days of reduced productivity in a three-month period.⁴⁴⁸ Conditions can be exacerbated during emergencies when added stressors can lead to social isolation, economic hardship or grief. All of these consequences reinforce the need to provide individuals with adequate access to mental health services.^{449,450}

Solutions: Ensuring access to mental health and screening services can help encourage the utilization of services, support early diagnosis and help reduce poor mental health outcomes.³³⁶

Part 1 Offer Mental Health Screening (Max: 1 Pt)

For All Spaces:

The project or organization makes a clinical assessment screening tool (e.g., self-assessment, screening tool administered by a professional) for common mental health conditions available to all employees and students either in-person or virtually, and at no cost. The tool meets the following requirements:

- a. Addresses, at a minimum, stress, depression, anxiety and substance abuse.
- b. Provides confidentiality by leveraging a licensed mental health professional, third party organization, online screening or health insurance offering.
- c. Includes directed feedback and/or guidance on interpretation of results and provides next steps for those who screen positive or at-risk.^{41,443}

Part 2 Offer Mental Health Services (Max: 0 Pt)

For All Spaces:

The project or organization makes a mental health benefits policy available to all eligible employees that meets following requirements:

- a. Mental health support is available at no cost or subsidized and covers the following at a minimum:
 1. Clinical screening and referral to licensed mental health professionals and support resources.⁴⁴³
 2. Inpatient treatment (e.g., residential programs, hospitalization).⁴⁴³
 3. Outpatient treatment, including options for telemental health services (e.g., in-person therapy, online therapy).^{443,451}
 4. Prescription medication.⁴⁴³
- b. Mental health parity in health service coverage.⁴⁴³
- c. Information on benefits coverage and how to access mental health services and community resources is easily and confidentially available (e.g., via a health portal or employee website).⁴⁴³
- d. Confidential benefits consultation with people who are clearly identified and qualified (e.g., benefits counselor, human resources representative) is made available.

EB10 ESTABLISH EDUCATION AND SUPPORT | O (MAX: 2 PT)

Intent: Support career growth by reducing barriers to educational and professional advancement.

Summary: This WELL feature requires financial support for education and/or mentoring opportunities to support career advancement and financial stability.

Issue: Creating supportive programs for education, mentorship and sponsorship can positively impact employee financial health and opportunities.³³⁹ Such support can have short and long-term effects on many dimensions of an employee's life and can benefit other members of their immediate family including spouses, children and parents.⁴⁵² Discrimination and bias result in differences in access to economic, social and educational support and have historically kept marginalized populations from achieving gainful employment.^{337,338} Financial wellness also impacts mental health, housing stability and food security.⁴⁵³

Solutions: Research shows that minorities and women benefit from peer-to-peer mentors and sponsors who champion them.^{338,454,455} Sponsors provide a deeper level of mentorship to their proteges.⁴⁵⁶ Through exposure and relationships, they provide career advancement opportunities for the protegee when they are "in and out of the room".⁴⁵⁶ Mentorship develops trust between the two parties, creating a foundation for a successful relationship between mentor and mentee.³³⁸ Mentorship surveys also reveal satisfaction amongst employees within such programs – in the United States, 71% of employees with a mentor say their company provides them with excellent or good opportunities to advance their careers.⁴⁵⁵ Employees may also benefit from other support options such as speaker sessions, workshops and seminars.⁴⁵⁷ Guest speakers can help advance professional development, spark new ideas and offer follow-up training opportunities.⁴⁵⁸ Providing subsidized financial assistance to promote education may create more opportunities for career advancement and, therefore, bring greater financial stability for individuals and their families.⁴⁵⁹⁻⁴⁶¹ Research from the United States found that 80% of employees agreed that their employer's tuition assistance program makes them more likely to stay with the organization, and 71% of respondents rated tuition assistance as the best or among the best benefits offered by their employer (excluding health care benefits).³³⁹ Financial assistance for education and peer-to-peer mentorship positively impacts all employees and, in particular, individuals who have historically had more barriers to education and professional development.^{455,461}

Part 1 Part 1 (Max: 2 Pt)

For All Spaces:

The project or organization provides a Tuition Assistance Program (TAP), which may be limited to select institutions, to all eligible employees that meets the following requirement:

- a. Pays for a minimum of 75% of educational expenses for all enrolled courses each term/year (including tuition, program fees and books/materials) for vocational training, undergraduate, graduate, certificate courses and similar educational goals. Assistance is structured per the table below:

Tier	Tuition Assistance Structure	Point Value
1	Reimbursements for educational expenses	1 point
2	Direct payments for educational expenses	2 points

OR

The project or organization provides a mentorship or sponsorship program that meets the following requirements:

- a. A process for matching mentor to mentee and/or sponsor to protégé (e.g., interest form).
- b. A plan development process co-created between mentor and mentee or sponsor and protégé to identify the needs, goals and objectives. The plan should be customized and focus on individual strengths, personality, skills and workstyles.
- c. A process by which mentees and protégés report on meetings between the mentor/mentee or sponsor/protégé and participation in activities recommended by the mentor or sponsor.
- d. An allocated budget for specialized resources or training related to professional development (e.g., conferences, courses, assessments, workshops, group sessions) for all participating mentees and/or protégés.^{249,250}
- e. Mandatory training about explicit and implicit bias (in the form of educational seminars, workshops, classes or on-demand modules) for all participating employees before engagement in the program.

Note: This Option is worth 1 point

Note:

This feature is a beta strategy and has an additional documentation requirement (beta feature feedback form). The feedback form supports IWBI in developing new features that are effective and applicable to projects around the world.

EB11 SUPPORT VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE | O (MAX: 1 PT)

Intent: Increase availability and access to support services, resources and care for victims of domestic violence.

Summary: This WELL feature requires a policy that supports victims of domestic violence and employee education on available resources.

Issue: Domestic violence is the most common form of gender-based violence across the world.³⁴⁰ Women are disproportionately affected, with violence most commonly perpetrated by men against women.⁴⁶³ The World Health Organization estimates that around 30% of women who have been in an intimate relationship experience some form of physical and/or sexual violence committed by an intimate partner.³⁴⁰ Domestic violence can lead to a range of adverse health consequences, including higher risk of injuries, sexually transmitted infections (including HIV), depression, anxiety and substance misuse.³⁴⁰ The impact of this violence is severe: globally, it is estimated that up to 38% of murders of women are committed by a male intimate partner.³⁴⁰ Pregnant women are more likely to die from domestic violence trauma than women who are not pregnant.⁴⁶⁴ Worldwide, women with a disability are more likely to experience domestic violence when compared with women without a disability.⁴⁶⁵⁻⁴⁶⁷ In the United States, over 50% of American Indian and Alaskan Natives and 40% of Black women experience physical violence by an intimate partner.⁴⁶⁸ Additionally, surveys from the United States found that 61% of bisexual women, 54% transgender individuals and 44% of lesbians experience some form of violence from an intimate partner.^{469,470} Beyond the negative health outcomes, the impacts of domestic violence can lead to significant social and economic challenges. In workplace settings, research shows that victims of domestic violence are more likely to have reduced performance and productivity and increased absenteeism and turnover.^{341,342} Victims may also experience loss of wages and inability to work, as well as increased risk of homelessness.^{340,471,472}

Solutions: Organizations can play a role in responding to domestic violence by establishing policies and providing resources designed to protect and support victims.^{341,342,344,473} It is also important for employers to develop supportive and non-judgmental environments in which employees feel comfortable and safe disclosing any violent situation they may be facing.³⁴⁴ Employers can help protect victims through protocols and processes for confidential reporting, reviewing and responding to an incident, call screening, increasing security and responding to emergencies.^{341,473} Policies that provide victims with the ability to change workplace location and adjust start and finish times are also supportive.^{341,344,473} Countries such as New Zealand and the Philippines, as well as parts of Canada, have introduced legislation that promotes best practices among employers to support victims of domestic violence through accommodations such as dedicated paid time off and financial support for relocation.⁴⁷⁴⁻⁴⁷⁶ By providing policies to support victims and by educating employees about the issue and available resources, employers may play a role in helping to reduce the physical and mental impacts of domestic violence.^{343,344}

Part 1 Part 1 (Max: 1 Pt)

For All Spaces:

The project or organization makes available to all eligible employees a domestic violence policy that meets the following requirements:

- a. Provides employees who are victims of domestic violence at least ten days of leave, paid at the employee's full salary or wages, during any 12-month period. Leave must meet the following requirements:^{341,343,344,473}
 1. Distinct from paid time off, sick leave and family leave.
 2. If requiring incident disclosure for employees to qualify, takes steps to protect employee privacy.
 3. Does not require a prerequisite minimum qualifying period of employment before an employee is eligible to take leave.
- b. Outlines a clear protocol for incident reporting and response that includes the following:
 1. Process for employees to confidentially report incidents of domestic violence, including one or more designated contacts that employees can approach confidentially for support when reporting incidents.⁴⁷³
 2. Process of incident response that includes consultation with the victim, prioritizes victim privacy and safety and ensures incident disclosure will not adversely impact victim employment status.
- c. Offers employees who report domestic violence incidents at least two of the following:
 1. Flexible working arrangements (e.g., adjusted work hours or location)^{341,343,344,473}
 2. Heightened security measures (e.g., call screenings, controlled workplace access, duress alarms, changes to contact information, worksite security escorts)^{341,463,473}
 3. Referrals to local support organizations, community groups and crisis lines, including those available through Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs).^{343,473}
 4. Temporary accommodations or financial support to cover the costs of temporary accommodations.³⁴¹
- d. Policy and related resources provided by the organization are easily and confidentially available (e.g., via a health portal, mailed communications, employee website) to all employees and reviewed and adjusted (as needed) annually by the organization. Policy must be made available to all new employees during onboarding.^{341,463}

The project or organization offers in-person or virtual trainings (e.g., workshops, seminars) that meet the following requirements:

- a. Are required of all managers and made available to all employees.^{463,473}
- b. Covers the following topics:^{343,344}
 1. The relevant domestic violence policy and resources.
 2. Signs and symptoms that a person may be a victim of domestic violence.
 3. How to appropriately respond if a colleague or direct report discloses that they or another employee is experiencing domestic violence.

Note:

This feature is a beta strategy and has an additional documentation requirement (beta feature feedback form). The feedback form supports IWBI in developing new features that are effective and applicable to projects around the world.

SUPPORTIVE PROGRAMS AND SPACES (ES)

The Supportive Programs and Spaces action area includes strategies for providing products, programs and spaces that promote health and well-being for individuals with varying needs.

There are many factors that can affect the ongoing cultivation of a more equitable, healthier workplace, such as opportunities to support people who are breastfeeding, access to areas for restoration and movement, and availability of quality food that accommodates diverse dietary needs.

Supportive environments should address the needs of new mothers, who represent a significant segment of the global labor force, by, for instance, providing postpartum lactation support to help maintain their own health and the health of their babies.^{477,478} Breastfeeding is recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the American Academy of Pediatrics to support optimal growth and development in infants.^{479–483} Yet, numerous barriers persist, including a lack of workplace support, and contribute to a decreased milk supply and/or early weaning among working mothers.⁴⁷⁸ A safe and private space with essential amenities to support breastfeeding or pumping is needed for mothers when returning to work.^{478,484} Designated lactation rooms and other supportive programs and policies, such as schedules that provide time to nurse or pump breastmilk, can decrease healthcare expenses, reduce employee absences associated with caring for a sick child and increase retention rates.^{410,478,485,486}

Restorative spaces also play an important role in creating a healthier environment. Work-induced fatigue is common among office workers, with burnout increasing across the globe.^{487–489} In the United States, about one in four working parents experience burnout, with mothers of color at greatest risk.⁴⁹⁰ For people with autism, life stressors including masking their symptoms can cause autistic burnout, a specific burnout characterized by long-term exhaustion, loss of function and reduced tolerance to stimulus.⁴⁹¹ Workplaces that provide restorative spaces for individuals to step away and recharge can help alleviate the negative effects associated with work-related fatigue and mental depletion.⁴⁸⁷ Outdoor spaces can also be used for restorative activities. Beyond their stress-relieving benefits, indoor and outdoor restorative environments support individuals with a wide variety of beliefs, religions and traditions by providing space for practices like prayer and meditation.

Another component of a supportive and healthy environment includes the provision of physical activity spaces. Despite the many benefits of physical activity and widely disseminated guidelines, nearly a quarter of the global population does not achieve recommended physical activity levels.^{492,493} International physical activity guidelines recommend that the general population engages in regular cardiovascular and muscle-strengthening activities.⁴⁹³ Lack of access to safe and convenient places to be physically active contributes to numerous ethnic and racial disparities in physical activity levels, such as among Hispanic, Black, and American Indian/Alaskan Native adults in the United States.⁴⁹⁴ For instance, regardless of neighborhood socioeconomic status, Black Americans identify concerns for safety and the need to be hypervigilant due to increased discrimination as major barriers to exercising outside.⁴⁹⁵ In addition to safety concerns, African American women in the United States report cost, access and time to be among the most significant deterrents to being physically active.⁴⁹⁶ Parents have identified scheduling constraints, work, guilt, lack of support and family responsibilities as challenges to physical activity.⁴⁹⁷ Evidence also suggests that children with ADHD participate in daily physical activity at a significantly lower rate than their peers without ADHD.^{498–500} At the same time, acute physical activity may improve cognitive performance in people with ADHD, as well as in people with severe impairments in executive functioning.^{501,502} For example, evidence suggests that short sessions of physical activity may improve attention, mood and motivation in adults with ADHD.^{498–500} Facilitating access to physical activity spaces is a key strategy toward creating health-promoting spaces for all.

Cleaning is also fundamental to maintaining a healthy indoor environment. For example, the presence of common microorganisms, such as dust mites, is directly related to the development of asthma and allergies. Yet, many cleaning products contain ingredients that are hazardous to human health.^{503–505} Some cleaning products may emit substances that irritate the nose, eyes, throat and lungs and can cause or trigger asthma attacks.⁵⁰⁶ Certain populations, such as Hispanic workers who make up 60% of cleaning staff in the United States, experience increased exposure to health-harming cleaning chemicals.⁵⁰⁷ Additionally, chemical and fragrance sensitivity is common in people with autism, causing migraines, asthma attacks and other respiratory and neurological problems.^{508,509} A thorough plan for cleaning operations that reduces exposure to toxic chemicals benefits both those who regularly use the space as well as the staff who maintain it.⁵¹⁰

Lastly, environments that provide access to nutritious, affordable foods are critical to supporting health. Poor diets that consist of highly processed foods, with added sugars, refined grains and trans fats, are the second-leading risk factor for mortality and morbidity globally, accounting for 8% of all deaths and contributing to an estimated 9.6% of the global burden of disease.⁵¹¹ In the United States, Native Americans, Alaska Natives, African Americans and Hispanics are more likely to have access to unhealthy food options and less likely to have access to healthy food options, a trend that is correlated to higher rates of diabetes.^{512,513} Close proximity to supermarkets, grocery stores and farmers markets that offer abundant and affordable fruits, vegetables, whole grains and other nutritious options can help support improved dietary behaviors.^{514,515} Additionally, the types of food provided in a workplace and the information accompanying it affects the way people navigate food choices, food allergies and other intolerances.^{516–519}

ES01 OFFER LACTATION SUPPORT | O (MAX: 1 PT)

Intent: Provide spaces and policies that encourage and support nursing mothers.

Summary: This WELL feature requires the provision of dedicated and well-equipped lactation rooms as well as paid break times, support during travel and other resources to help mothers continue breastfeeding after returning to work.

Issue: New mothers represent a significant segment of the global labor force and require postpartum lactation support to maintain their own health and the health of their babies.^{477,478} Worldwide, only 40% of working women with infants have basic maternity benefits and the rates are even lower in areas of Africa where only 15% of working women have any employment benefits that support breastfeeding.⁵²⁰ It is estimated that the lives of 520,000 children could be saved with greater global investment in breastfeeding.⁵²¹ Exclusively breastfeeding infants for the first six months is recommended by WHO, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the American Academy of Pediatrics to support optimal growth and development in infants.⁴⁷⁹⁻⁴⁸³ Following this breastfeeding recommendation may reduce rates of gastrointestinal infection, asthma, allergies and ear infections in children, as well as decrease rates of depression and lower the risk of developing breast and ovarian cancer in breastfeeding individuals.^{479,481,482} Numerous barriers, including a lack of workplace support, contribute to a drop in milk supply and/or early weaning among working mothers.⁴⁷⁸ A safe and private space with essential amenities to continue breastfeeding or pumping is needed for mothers returning to work.^{478,484}

Solutions: Supportive breastfeeding programs and policies, such as schedules that provide time to nurse or pump breastmilk, lactation counseling and special accommodations for business travel can help working mothers initiate and sustain breastfeeding.^{478,485} Lactation rooms that provide privacy, optimize thermal and acoustic comfort and meet accessibility standards can enable mothers to continue nursing or pumping breastmilk in the workplace.⁴⁸⁶ These solutions can decrease healthcare expenses, reduce employee absences associated with caring for a sick child and increase retention rates.⁴¹⁰

Part 1 Offer Workplace Breastfeeding Support (Max: 1 Pt)

For All Spaces:

The project or organization provides a policy to all eligible employees who are breastfeeding that meets the following requirements:

- a. Paid break times for nursing or pumping that last at least 20 minutes at least every 3 hours, with flexibility as necessary to meet individual needs.⁴⁸⁶
- b. One-time coverage or a subsidy of at least 50% for the purchase of a portable breast pump and/or availability of hospital-grade electric pump that accommodates multiple users.⁴¹⁰
- c. Postpartum lactation counseling, including back-to-work lactation counseling, offered at no cost or subsidized by at least 50%.⁴¹⁰

The project or organization provides a policy to all eligible employees who are breastfeeding while traveling for business that meets the following requirements:

- a. For all trips: an insulated cooler is supplied at no cost or fully reimbursed.
- b. For all overnight trips: hotels (or other overnight accommodations) with refrigerator access.
- c. For trips lasting longer than 48 hours: full coverage or reimbursement for breastmilk shipping services (e.g., to have expressed milk shipped home).

Part 2 Design Lactation Room (Max: 0 Pt)

For All Spaces:

The project provides at least one dedicated lactation room for all employees that meets the following requirements:

- a. Is at least 2.1 x 2.1 m.⁴⁸⁶
- b. Includes, at a minimum, the following:
 1. Work surface and comfortable chair.⁴⁸⁶
 2. Two electrical outlets.⁴⁸⁶
 3. User-operated lock with occupancy indicator (e.g., signage).⁴⁸⁶
 4. Reservation system, designed to consider privacy preferences (e.g., utilizes a numbering system instead of individual names).^{410,486}
 5. Proximity to sink, faucet, paper towel dispenser and soap. These amenities are not required to be located in a lactation room but may not be located in a bathroom.^{486,522}
 6. Refrigerator with dedicated, sufficient space for milk storage, based on assessment of user needs.⁴⁸⁶
 7. Dedicated microwave or other method to sanitize or sterilize pump equipment, through boiling, steaming, or other sterilizing solutions.⁵²³
 8. Dedicated storage space for pumping supplies.⁴⁸⁶
- c. Provides a calming and comfortable environment that addresses, at a minimum, the following:
 1. Sound minimization.⁴⁸⁶
 2. Ambient lighting.⁴⁸⁶
 3. Thermal comfort.⁴⁸⁶
- d. Present in a quantity that meets current and anticipated demand.⁴¹⁰

ES02 PROVIDE RESTORATIVE SPACE | O (MAX: 1 PT)

Intent: Provide access to spaces that promote restoration and relief from mental fatigue or stress.

Summary: This WELL feature requires environments that encourage restoration.

Issue: Work-induced fatigue is common among office workers, with reports of burnout increasing in the Asia-Pacific region, Europe and the United States^{487–489} About one in four working parents experience burnout and Black mothers are at the greatest risk.⁴⁹⁰ For people with autism, life stressors including masking their symptoms can cause autistic burnout, a specific burnout characterized by long-term exhaustion, loss of function and reduced tolerance to stimulus.⁴⁹¹ Mental fatigue and stress accumulate at work as individuals deplete their physical and mental resources, creating burnout.⁴⁸⁷ Moreover, prolonged exposure to stress results in psychological distress, including decreased mental acuity, deficits in motivation and irritability.^{487,488}

Solutions: Workplaces that provide restorative spaces for individuals to recharge and refocus can help alleviate the negative effects associated with work-related fatigue and mental depletion.⁵²⁴ By incorporating nature, among other recovery elements, these spaces can help encourage overall well-being.¹⁸³ For example, exposure to plants and other natural elements has been linked with decreased levels of diastolic blood pressure, depression and anxiety; increased attention capacity; better recovery from job stress; and increased psychological well-being.^{142,143} Interaction with nature can also support recovery from illness and increase pain tolerance.^{142,143} Outdoor spaces can also be used for restorative activities. Beyond their stress-relieving benefits, restorative environments support individuals with a wide variety of beliefs, religions and traditions by providing space for practices like prayer and meditation.

Part 1 Part 1 (Max: 1 Pt)

For All Spaces:

The project provides at least one indoor or outdoor space for all regular occupants. The space may be made up of a single space or multiple spaces that meet the following requirements:

- a. The main purpose is for relaxation and restoration. Space may serve multiple functions but is not to be used for work.
- b. Minimum size of 7 m² plus 0.1 m² per regular occupant or 186 m², whichever is smaller.
- c. Provides a calming and comfortable environment by incorporating at least five of the following:
 1. Adjustable lighting (e.g., dimmable light levels for indoor spaces).⁵²⁵
 2. Sound interventions (e.g., water feature, natural sounds, sound masking).⁵²⁶
 3. Thermal control (e.g., fans, shading).⁵²⁷
 4. Seating arrangements that accommodate a range of user preferences and activities (e.g., movable lightweight chairs, cushions, mats).⁵²⁵
 5. Nature or natural elements.^{528,529}
 6. Subdued colors, textures and forms.^{530–532}
 7. Visual privacy.⁵³³
- d. Includes signage, education materials or other resources explaining its purpose and intended use.

Note: If restorative space is provided only outdoors, it must be functional year-round.

The project encourages the use of restorative space(s) through the following:

- a. Policy allowing paid breaks away from the workstation for all employees.⁴⁰²

ES03 PROVIDE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY SPACES | O (MAX: 1 PT)

Intent: Promote exercise and movement by providing complimentary access to spaces that enable physical activity.

Summary: This WELL feature requires access to a physical activity space at no cost through an on-site or nearby fitness facility.

Issue: International physical activity guidelines recommend that the general population engage in regular cardiovascular and muscle-strengthening activities.⁴⁹³ Despite widely disseminated guidelines, nearly a quarter of the global population does not achieve recommended physical activity levels.⁴⁹² Key determinants of an individual's physical activity levels include time, convenience, motivation, self-efficacy, weather conditions, travel and family obligations, fear of injury and lack of social support.^{166,167} Lack of access to safe and convenient places to be physically active contributes to the numerous ethnic and racial disparities in physical activity levels, such as among Hispanic, Black, and American Indian/Alaskan Native adults in the United States.⁴⁹⁴ For instance, regardless of neighborhood socioeconomic status, Black Americans identify concerns for safety and the need to be hypervigilant due to increased discrimination as major barriers to exercising outside.⁴⁹⁵ Physical activity might provide additional benefits for people who are neurodivergent. For example, short sessions of physical activity may improve attention, mood and motivation in adults with ADHD.^{499,500} Acute physical activity may improve cognitive performance in people with ADHD, as well as in people with more severe impairments in executive functioning by triggering brain activation.^{501,502} Still, evidence from the United States suggests that adults and children with ADHD participate in daily physical activity at a significantly lower rate than their peers without ADHD.⁴⁹⁸⁻⁵⁰⁰

Solutions: A systematic review of studies from the United States found that creating enhanced places for physical activity was effective at increasing exercise.⁵³⁴ Among the participants who exercised more, the review also showed improved health outcomes for physical fitness including aerobic capacity, energy expenditure, weight loss and decreased body fat.⁵³⁴ Providing easy access to spaces designed for physical activity helps individuals engage in regular fitness activities.⁵³⁴

Part 1 Part 1 (Max: 1 Pt)

For All Spaces:

A dedicated fitness facility is available within the project boundary at no cost to regular occupants and is sized according to one of the following requirements:

- a. The space includes at least two types of exercise or sporting equipment (e.g., free weights, treadmill, yoga mat, basketball) in quantities that allow use by at least 5% of regular occupants at any time.⁵³⁵
- b. The space includes at least two types of exercise or sporting equipment (e.g., free weights, treadmill, yoga mat, basketball). The minimum size is 25m² plus 0.1 m² per regular occupant or 930 m², whichever is smaller.⁵³⁶

OR

The project meets the following requirement:

- a. Regular occupants have access to a fitness facility at no cost within a 200 m walking distance of the project boundary.

ES04 SELECT PREFERRED CLEANING PRODUCTS | O (MAX: 1 PT)

Intent: Support the health of individuals and cleaners by utilizing less hazardous products.

Summary: This WELL feature requires the selection of low-hazard cleaning products.

Issue: Cleaning is fundamental for maintaining a healthy indoor environment. For example, the presence of common microorganisms such as dust mites, which are ubiquitously present around the world, is directly related to the development of asthma and allergies.^{503,504} Yet, many cleaning products contain ingredients that degrade the indoor air quality and may be hazardous to human health.⁵⁰⁵ Some cleaning products emit substances that irritate the nose, eyes, throat and lungs and can cause or trigger asthma attacks.⁵⁰⁶ An international study demonstrated that childhood asthma was associated with the mothers' occupational exposure to cleaning products near or at conception.⁵³⁷ Furthermore, chemical and fragrance sensitivity is common in people with autism and is associated with migraines, asthma attacks and other respiratory and neurological problems.^{508,509} Worldwide, 71% of all migrant workers are employed in the service industry, where they are prone to dangerous chemicals exposure.⁵³⁸ Hispanic individuals make up 60% of the cleaning staff in the United States, thus experiencing increased exposure to health-harming cleaning chemicals.⁵⁰⁷

Solutions: A thorough plan for cleaning operations that reduces exposure to toxic chemicals can benefit both those who regularly use the space as well as the staff who maintain it.⁵⁰⁷⁻⁵⁰⁹ Using cleaning products that contain less hazardous ingredients may reduce the risk of respiratory and dermal symptoms.⁵³⁹ Switching to safer cleaning products does not compromise cleaning effectiveness and also reduces environmental damage.^{510,540}

Part 1 Part 1 (Max: 1 Pt)

For All Spaces except Dwelling Units:

The project or organization has a cleaning policy that lists all surface cleaning and disinfection products and specifies that they meet the following requirements:

- a. Cleaning products as-sold meet one of the following:
 1. Are labeled as 'low-hazard' or 'safer' by an [Reference](#),⁵⁴¹ or by a third-party certification recognized by the local government where the building is located.
 2. Have ingredients disclosed through a Safety Data Sheet (SDS) that meets EU Regulation 2015/830 (CLP)⁵⁴² or through a disclosure document that meets California State Bill No. 258⁵⁴³, and there are no ingredients listed in the disclosure document present at 100 ppm (0.01%) or above that are classified with the following codes and hazard statements as defined by the Globally Harmonized System (GHS)⁵⁴⁴: H311, H312, H317, H334, H340, H350, H360, H372.
 3. Meet Feature X08 Materials Optimization.
- b. Products labeled as disinfectants meet the following:
 1. Have all antimicrobial efficacy claims registered by a governmental office and stated in their label.
 2. Utilize only active ingredients only from the following list: citric acid, hydrogen peroxide, L-lactic acid, ethanol, isopropanol, peroxyacetic acid, sodium bisulfate, chitosan.
 3. Section 2 of the SDS does not contain the following GHS codes: H311, H312, H317, H334, H340, H350, H360, H372.

ES05 ENSURE LOCAL FOOD ACCESS | O (MAX: 1 PT)

Intent: Promote the consumption of fresh, local and seasonal fruits and vegetables by increasing access.

Summary: This WELL feature requires consideration of the local food environment during site selection or programming.

Issue: Dietary patterns around the world are influenced by a complex combination of personal, cultural and environmental factors, including the local food environment. The local food environment encompasses the type and density of available food retail outlets.⁵⁴⁵ Some characteristics of local food environments are associated with weight gain and obesity in the surrounding community.⁵⁴⁶ Nearly 3 billion people worldwide, especially those who are low income, do not have access to healthy diets.⁵⁴⁷ In the United States, Native Americans, Alaska Natives, African Americans and Hispanics are more likely to have access to unhealthy food options and less likely to have access to healthy food options, a trend that is correlated to higher rates of diabetes.^{512,513}

Solutions: Close proximity to supermarkets, grocery stores and farmers markets that offer abundant and affordable fruits, vegetables, whole grains and other nutritious options can help support improved dietary and lifestyle behaviors.^{514,515} Hospitals and healthcare institutions that host farmers markets and farm stands contribute to healthier food environments by increasing fruit and vegetable consumption, an effective model that may be generalizable to other large institutions.^{548,549} Communities with a greater density of healthy food retail outlets are associated with a lower BMI and, more generally, the availability of supermarkets is associated with meeting dietary recommendations.⁵⁵⁰⁻⁵⁵³ Mobile food markets, food carts and fruit and vegetable stands are additional ways to increase access to healthy food options.⁵⁴⁸

Part 1 Part 1 (Max: 1 Pt)

For All Spaces:

The main building entrance is located within a 400 m walk distance of one of the following:

- a. Supermarket or store with a fresh fruit and vegetable section.⁵⁵⁴
- b. Farmers market that is open at least once a week and operates for at least four months of the year.⁵⁵⁵

OR

The project meets one of the following requirements:

- a. Serves as a distribution point for a community-based agriculture program that delivers fruits and vegetables at least twice a month for at least four months of the year, in which regular occupants can participate.⁵⁵⁵
- b. Hosts the weekly sale of fruits and vegetables (e.g., fruit and vegetable carts or stands, mobile markets) for at least four months of the year.⁵⁵⁶

OR

The project meets the following requirement:

- a. Transportation is provided at no cost between the project and a supermarket and/or store with a fresh fruit and vegetable section and/or farmers market.

ES06 PROMOTE FOOD QUALITY | O (MAX: 1 PT)

Intent: Help individuals avoid highly processed foods and refined ingredients.

Summary: This WELL feature requires the availability of food and beverages that have limited amounts of sugar and refined grains.

Issue: Poor diets that consist of highly processed foods, with added sugars, refined grains and trans fats, are the second-leading risk factor for mortality and morbidity globally, accounting for 8% of all deaths and contributing to an estimated 9.6% of the global burden of disease.⁵¹¹ For example, the consumption of large amounts of added sugar has been associated with overall poor diet quality, as well as an increased risk of heart disease, obesity and tooth decay.^{557–559} Moreover, maternal sugar consumption during pregnancy may adversely affect child cognition.⁵⁶⁰ Refined grains, such as white flour and white rice, go through a process that removes most of their vitamins, minerals and dietary fiber, making them less healthy than whole grains.⁵⁶¹ National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) data from 2013–2016 revealed that Hispanic adults and non-Hispanic Black adults had a significantly lower whole grain to total grain intake when compared to non-Hispanic white adults.⁵⁶² Fiber consumption is associated with improved digestive health in the general population and has also been linked to a lower risk of heart disease, stroke, hypertension, diabetes and obesity.⁵⁶³ Specifically, fiber can help relieve constipation, a common ailment for people with autism.^{564,565} In addition to fiber, whole grains also provide magnesium, two dietary deficiencies frequently observed in people with ADHD.^{566–569}

Solutions: Increasing access to healthier food items includes increasing the availability of healthier alternatives, as well as limiting the availability of highly processed foods. Based on recommendations by the World Health Organization (WHO), on average, adults should consume no more than 25 grams of added sugar per day.⁵⁵⁷ Limiting one's intake of sugar-sweetened beverages and sugary foods can help individuals reduce their daily sugar intake to meet these recommendations.⁵⁵⁷ Promoting the consumption of whole grains by increasing whole-grain options can also help individuals increase their intake of dietary fiber.^{559,570}

Part 1 Limit Total Sugars (Max: 1 Pt)

For All Spaces:

Foods and beverages are sold or provided by (or under contract with) the project owner on a daily basis and meet the following requirements:

- a. Beverages do not contain more than 25 g of sugar per container or serving.⁵⁵⁷
- b. At least 25% of beverages contain no sugar per container or serving, or drinking water is available at no cost.
- c. Non-beverage food items (except whole fruit) do not contain more than 25 g of sugar per serving.⁵⁵⁷

Part 2 Promote Whole Grains (Max: 0 Pt)

For All Spaces:

Grain-based foods are sold or provided by (or under contract with) the project owner on a daily basis and meet the following requirements:

- a. In at least 50% of grain-based foods (foods that have a grain flour as the first ingredient or that contain $\geq 30\%$ grain ingredients), a whole grain is the first ingredient.⁵⁷¹
- b. If both whole-grain and refined-grain options are available, whole-grain options do not cost more than their refined-grain counterparts (e.g., brown rice does not cost more than white rice).

Note:

Projects must have at least one whole-grain option at each food outlet (if grain-based foods are sold or provided) but the 50% calculation may be considered across the entire food service operation (per food category or total number of grain-based foods).

ES07 ACCOMMODATE FOOD SENSITIVITIES | O (MAX: 1 PT)

Intent: Help individuals make informed food choices through labeling of food allergies and intolerances.

Summary: This WELL feature requires the accommodation of special diets, the labeling of food allergens and the availability of allergy training for food service staff.

Issue: Nutrition information panels and nutrition fact labels are often found on packaged foods and beverages. These provide consumers with useful information including allergen identification. However, the same level of nutritional transparency does not exist for freshly prepared foods and beverages available in restaurants or other retail establishments. Nutritional transparency is especially important for the millions of individuals worldwide who manage food allergies and intolerances.⁵⁷² The World Allergy Organization reports that the prevalence of food allergies is increasing in countries around the world.⁵⁷³ Approximately 5.6 million children under 18 in the United States have food allergies requiring vigilance at meal time to prevent adverse allergic reactions.⁵⁷⁴ Moreover, nursing mothers may need to avoid specific foods, such as dairy, if their infant exhibits an allergic reaction to exposure through the breastmilk.⁵⁷⁵ Additionally, a review of international studies suggests that nearly half of people with autism suffer from gastrointestinal issues which may, in part, be due to increased gut permeability or "leaky gut".⁵⁷⁶ This condition may be improved through the avoidance of food components that are suspected to weaken the intestinal barrier such as gliadin, a protein found in wheat and other cereal grains.⁵⁷⁷

Solutions: Food service professionals can play a critical role in making all spaces safer and more supportive for individuals with food allergies and intolerances by helping them navigate food choices. Food allergy training helps enable all food service staff to identify and address potential food allergens and intolerances. Ingredient transparency through accurate food allergen labeling can help individuals identify and avoid potential allergens. Providing meal alternatives that avoid common food allergies or intolerances can help accommodate individual dietary preferences and ensure that everyone has the opportunity to eat a balanced meal. Alternatives can also minimize the stress and worry faced by individuals with food and dietary restrictions by minimizing the risk of consuming potentially harmful foods.⁵⁷⁸ To further accommodate special dietary needs, alternative food items can be offered at the same or similar price as standard items.

Part 1 Address Food Allergens (Max: 1 Pt)

For Commercial Kitchen Spaces:

Food is prepared on-site by (or under contract with) the project owner on a daily basis and the following requirements are met:

- a. All food service staff (including managers, servers and kitchen staff) are offered annual food allergy training that covers, at a minimum, the following topics:⁵⁷⁴
 1. Overview of food allergies.
 2. Anaphylaxis response protocols.
 3. Emergency response protocols.
 4. Communications protocols.
 5. Reducing risk for cross-contact.
 6. Use of recipes and ingredient disclosure.
 7. Knowledge test.
- b. At least one food service staff member who has completed the food allergy training within 12 months is present to handle questions and special requests from individuals about food allergens during hours of operation.

Food is prepared on-site by (or under contract with) the project owner on a daily basis and the following requirement is met:

- a. Point-of-decision signage is present to encourage individuals to report their food allergies to food service staff.

Part 2 Accommodate Special Diets (Max: 0 Pt)

For All Spaces:

Meals with main dishes are sold or provided by (or under contract with) the project owner on a daily basis and include at least one option that meets the following requirements:

- a. Does not contain peanut and tree nuts.
- b. Does not contain gluten and wheat.
- c. Does not contain soy.
- d. Does not contain sesame.
- e. Does not contain animal products, including seafood, dairy, and eggs.

Part 3 Label Food Allergens and Intolerances (Max: 0 Pt)

For All Spaces:

Foods and beverages are sold or provided by (or under contract with) the project owner and all foods and beverages are clearly labeled at point-of-decision (e.g., on packaging, menus, signage) to indicate if they contain the following common food allergens and intolerances:⁵⁷⁹

- a. Peanut.
- b. Fish.
- c. Shellfish.
- d. Soy.
- e. Milk.
- f. Egg.
- g. Wheat.
- h. Tree nuts.
- i. Sesame.
- j. Gluten.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (EC)

The Community Engagement action area aims to promote interaction, engagement and belonging for all community members and stakeholders.

Employees are increasingly seeking out organizations that have a culture of community engagement and social responsibility that supports the broader community in which the organization operates. Millennials, for example, represent a significant segment of the workforce, yet an international survey found that 25% were planning to quit their current employer in the next year due to the perception that their company's goals do not extend beyond profit.⁵⁸⁰ Meaningful action, such as scheduling volunteer opportunities, providing paid volunteer time off, matching employee charitable contributions and working with local community organizations, can make a positive contribution to the local community, help foster an organizational culture of social responsibility and enhance employee retention.^{580,583-585} Conversely, companies that do not demonstrate strong, outward social values have been shown to experience lower employee morale, engagement and productivity.⁵⁸⁵

Many buildings are situated in communities whereby the rightful, sacred lands were taken against the will of its original stewards and/or were developed through forced labor.⁵⁸⁸⁻⁵⁹⁰ Currently, there is still little acknowledgement of this history, which predominantly impacts Asian and African Americans in the United States, as well as Indigenous peoples in Australia, New Zealand and across North America.⁵⁸⁹⁻⁵⁹⁷ These harmful practices have caused detrimental physical, mental, emotional and economic impacts that have been passed down through generations; they have contributed to disruptions in community stability, continuity and support systems.^{588,595,598,599} Organizations should work in partnership with those who have been impacted to acknowledge and take steps toward reconciling these past harms. This community-centered approach can encourage healing and connection, grounded in place.⁶⁰⁰⁻⁶⁰⁴

Lastly, families unable to find affordable housing spend a significant portion of their income on housing costs, leaving insufficient resources to cover other basic needs such as food, clothing, utilities and medical care.⁶⁰⁵⁻⁶⁰⁷ Providing affordable housing units helps reconcile the many barriers that continue to prevent individuals from having access to healthy, safe and stable housing.

EC01 ENGAGE COMMUNITY | O (MAX: 1 PT)

Intent: Promote involvement in and connection with the surrounding community through volunteerism and community programming.

Summary: This WELL feature requires promoting a variety of community engagement opportunities, including programs and events.

Issue: Companies that do not demonstrate strong social values through community engagement, like local volunteering, have been shown to experience lower employee morale, engagement and productivity.⁵⁸⁵ It is estimated that 1 billion people worldwide volunteer their time, and many people focus primarily on issues that impact them and their local communities.⁶⁰⁸ Decreased community connection can lead to increased mental health issues, and volunteering is suggested as one remedy.^{311,609,610} Additionally, millennials represent an increasingly large segment of the workforce, yet an international survey found that one in four millennials planned to quit their current job in the next year due to the perception that their company's goals do not extend beyond profit.⁵⁸⁰

Solutions: There are a variety of ways to increase opportunities for community engagement and establish a culture of community participation. Scheduling volunteer opportunities, providing paid volunteer time off, matching employee charitable contributions and working with local community organizations can foster a culture of social responsibility, enhance employee retention and make a positive contribution to the local community.^{580,583-585}

Part 1 Part 1 (Max: 1 Pt)

For All Spaces:

The project or organization has a policy that meets at least two of the following requirements:

- a. All eligible employees are given the option to take paid time off to participate in volunteer activities for at least the equivalent of two workdays annually (separate from vacation, sick or other generally allocated paid time off).
- b. A list of local volunteer opportunities is provided to all employees, with at least one suitable opportunity per month and at least eight hours organized by the employer with a registered charity or non-profit.
- c. Employer matches employee's contributions to a registered charity or non-profit of employee's choice, up to a maximum annual amount defined by the employer.
- d. At least one community engagement program (e.g. events, talks, workshops, trainings or other public engagement intended to promote education, play, physical activity, social connection and/or well-being) at no cost to the public on a quarterly basis on- or off-site.^{609,611,612}

EC02 PROVIDE COMMUNITY SPACE | O (MAX: 1 PT)

Intent: Promote connection to the surrounding community by providing public spaces and community programming.

Summary: This WELL feature requires providing the surrounding community with a public space.

Issue: Research reveals a decline in community social support and relationships, and people who feel disconnected from their community encounter more mental health issues than those with a strong community connection.^{311,609,610} A strong sense of community is associated with improved well-being, civic responsibility and increased feelings of safety and security.⁶¹⁰ Having access to quality public spaces helps foster community connectedness and is a powerful measure for enhancing community resiliency and social well-being.⁶¹³ Yet, on average, only about 31% of the global population is within walking distance of a public space.⁶¹⁴ People with disabilities, the elderly and people with children experience greater barriers accessing public spaces.^{615,616}

Solutions: Public space and community programming can encourage social interaction and cohesion, community empowerment and collective feelings of ownership.^{609,610,617} This helps reduce health risks like stress, depression, heart disease, stroke and chronic disease and helps to improve physical and mental health, happiness and healthy behaviors.^{609,610,617-620}

Part 1 Part 1 (Max: 1 Pt)

For All Spaces:

The project designates outdoor or indoor space for public use at no cost that meets the following requirements:

- a. At least 186 m².⁶²¹
- b. Open at all times, unless closed for security purposes (e.g., during nighttime hours) or temporarily for special events.⁶²¹
- c. Signage or other communication clearly indicates hours the space is open and the designation for public use.⁶²¹
- d. Provides quality seating areas and is easily navigable for individuals of all abilities.^{173,621}

OR

One or more indoor or outdoor spaces within the project boundary are open for public convenings (e.g., local community groups, student clubs, non-profit organizations) at no cost that meets the following requirements:

- a. Has the capacity to hold at least 10 people.
- b. Is available for meetings and/or events (e.g., pop-up health services, community meetings) on a weekly basis, at a minimum.^{609,611,612}

EC03 PROVIDE HISTORICAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT | O (MAX: 1 PT)

Intent: To support the health, healing and reconciliation of communities that have historically suffered as a result of colonization, displacement and relocation.

Summary: This WELL feature requires projects to develop and implement a comprehensive historical acknowledgement program that assesses the organization's impacts on the community, is informed by members of the community, includes public education, and publicly acknowledges the historical context.

Issue: Certain populations have historically been displaced from their homelands and territories, with the threat of erasure due to imperial power dynamics, laws and decrees across the globe. These communities were the original stewards of land and biodiversity for millennia, making significant contributions to society through traditional and ancient knowledge.⁵⁸⁸⁻⁵⁹⁰ On a global scale, Indigenous Peoples and people across the African diaspora have witnessed their rightful and sacred lands being taken against their will through Doctrine of Discovery, broken agreements, and abuse of eminent domain and legal constructs such as heirs' property laws.^{594,597,622} In the United States, Asian and African American communities have made significant contributions to the building of the country through forced and unjust labor.^{589,590} In addition, significant contributions through forced labor have occurred in South America and the Caribbean region.⁵⁹¹⁻⁵⁹⁴ The harmful impacts of global colonization have led to disparities in physical, mental, emotional and economic well-being, long-term displacement, erased histories, as well as a breakdown of community, social and economic structures, the effects of which have passed down through generations.^{588,595,598,599} Studies have shown this has caused historical trauma and that the mental health of Indigenous youth still suffers on the Historical Loss Scale.⁶²³ This intergenerational trauma has been found in DNA at the cellular level.⁶²⁴ In Australia, New Zealand and North America, recent truth and reconciliation acknowledgments, laws and reparations have begun for Indigenous People who have suffered various human rights violations, including land rights abuse and attempted genocide.⁵⁹⁵⁻⁵⁹⁷ It is important that organizations work with representatives from within the affected community and/or Tribal Nation to ensure that their acknowledgement and reconciliation and/or reparations programs do no harm, as defined by the community.

Solutions: This feature seeks to acknowledge and begin the process of reconciliation for the valuable contributions from affected populations by encouraging healing and connection that is grounded in place and culturally-relevant values.⁶⁰⁰⁻⁶⁰⁴ The act of reconciliation illuminates and drives awareness of historical contributions of historically marginalized and colonized communities through action and future-facing programs (i.e., land acknowledgments, truth and reconciliation practices, empowerment programs, financial relief and economic development).

Part 1 Part 1 (Max: 1 Pt)

For All Spaces:

The project or organization develops and implements a comprehensive historical acknowledgment program that meets the following requirements:

- a. Review land deeds, historical records, census data or other credible sources (e.g., articles, websites, surveys) to identify a community that has historically suffered as a result of colonization, displacement and relocation.
- b. Conduct an assessment to determine if any of the organization's current practices or policies are harmful to the community receiving acknowledgment, including, at a minimum, the following:
 1. Discriminatory and harmful labor practices and the implicit biases, policies and structures that lead to them, including those impacting consultants and subcontractors (e.g., collaborative partnerships that may cause representational damage, poor working conditions, participation in modern slavery and privatized prison labor, salary inequity, discriminatory hiring practices and/or lack of representation in leadership).
 2. Occupancy on sacred land (e.g., burial sites, spiritual sites), land protected treaty or agreement (e.g., hunting and gathering rights), or seized land (e.g., by use of eminent domain).
 3. Practices that negatively impact all life and the environment, especially those in closest proximity to the project site (e.g., pollution, deforestation, poor waste management practices).
- c. Create a program for historical acknowledgement that:
 1. Is informed by members and leaders of the community and/or Tribal Nation, as identified through one or more meetings with community representatives.
 2. Acknowledges the beliefs and practices of the community and/or Tribal Nation.
 3. Promotes engagement including reconciliation and/or reparations (as applicable) between the organization and the community and/or Tribal Nation.
 4. Identifies a minimum three-year plan of action for how the organization will develop a meaningful relationship with the community and/or Tribal Nation that will benefit the community (e.g., employment incubator, mental health support, funding agreement, education opportunities, returning land or property).
 5. Includes a signed document acknowledging the partnership demonstrating the program was co-created between the organization and the community and/or Tribal Nation.
- d. Develop a communication plan in a physical or electronic format that provides:
 1. Education for employees and the general public about the community and/or Tribal Nation's historical contribution to society.
 2. Background on the historical acknowledgement program and its development, as well as opportunities for employees to engage with the plan of action.
- e. Express historical context publicly through at least one of the following methods:
 1. Mission statement
 2. Monument
 3. Proclamation
 4. Educational display
 5. Plaque
 6. Website
 7. Restoration of Indigenous names of landmarks
 8. Other expressions of historical acknowledgement

Note:

This feature is a beta strategy and has an additional documentation requirement (beta feature feedback form). The feedback form supports IWBI in developing new features that are effective and applicable to projects around the world.

EC04 ALLOCATE AFFORDABLE HOUSING | O (MAX: 2 PT)

Intent: Promote health and well-being by increasing access to safe and affordable housing.

Summary: This WELL feature requires the creation of affordable housing units to reduce housing costs for low-income tenants and offer multi-bedroom options.

Issue: Families unable to find affordable housing spend a significant portion of their income on housing costs, leaving insufficient resources to cover other basic needs such as food, clothing, utilities and medical care.⁶⁰⁵⁻⁶⁰⁷ Across the European Union, Japan, Australia and the United States, over 60 million households are financially strained by housing costs.⁶²⁵ With lack of access to affordable housing, many families live in substandard housing, which exposes them to mold, dust, water leaks, lead-based paint, poor air quality, temperature extremes and/or vermin. These living conditions can lead to poor health outcomes like asthma, infectious disease, cardiovascular events and, for children, nervous system damage.^{605-607,626,627} In 2016, only 3.2 million designated affordable housing units were available for the 10.4 million extremely low-income households in the United States; in India, there is a deficit of 11 million affordable units.^{628,629} In rural England, only 8% of housing stock is affordable compared to 20% in urban areas based on percentage of earnings.⁶³⁰ Affordable housing shortages lead to homelessness, which increases stress, substance use and morbidity in adults, as well as mental health issues and depression in youth.^{607,626,631}

Solutions: Increasing the affordability, quality and safety of housing improves resident health, feelings of security and self-esteem and increases developmental ability and nutrition levels in children.^{607,627} Providing access to those in need of affordable housing can help prevent communicable diseases, improve overall health and provide a stable and efficient platform for the delivery of food, healthcare and essential services, especially for vulnerable populations such as the elderly, children and individuals with chronic illnesses or disabilities.^{605,626,627,631,632} Providing affordable units that are functionally indistinguishable from other units in the same building can help owners avoid the stigmatization of those who are living in them.⁶³³ With rising urbanization, healthy affordable housing will be critical for community health promotion.⁶³⁴

Part 1 Part 1 (Max: 2 Pt)

For Dwelling Units:

The project meets the following requirements:

- A percentage of dwelling units are allocated for tenants whose incomes are at or below an income limit relative to the local median household income [e.g., Area Median Income (AMI)] and adjusted for family size. Recognition is awarded as per the selected tier in the table below:

Tier	Units Allocated and Income Limited	Point Value
1	20% of units or more, 0 - 50% of local median OR 40% of units or more, 51 - 80% of local median	1 point
2	100% of units, 0 - 80% of local median	2 points

- Total annual housing costs (i.e., rent and utilities) paid by affordable unit tenants are less than 30% of the income limit selected in requirement (a).
- Housing costs are maintained at the levels described in this feature for the duration of a project's engagement with WELL.
- Affordable housing units are not visually or functionally distinctive from market-rate units (if present) and have the same access point into the building.
- In projects with 10 or more affordable housing units, at least 50% of allocated units have two or more bedrooms and at least 10% of allocated units have three or more bedrooms.

Note:

This feature is a beta strategy and has an additional documentation requirement (beta feature feedback form). The feedback form supports IWBI in developing new features that are effective and applicable to projects around the world.

INNOVATION

The Innovation action area paves the way for projects to develop unique strategies for creating healthier, more equitable environments.

Projects are invited to submit innovation proposals that address a novel strategy not already included within the WELL features. Projects should use Feature I01: Innovate WELL to submit proposals.

Other Innovation features represent strategies that have been pre-approved by IWBI.

EI01 INNOVATION I | O (MAX: 1 PT)

Intent: Facilitate novel approaches to creating equitable, people-first places and celebrate leadership among projects.

Summary: As the scientific understanding of health equity continues to evolve, so too does the ability to address the complex issue of promoting health and well-being through built healthier spaces that go above and beyond WELL features.

Part 1 Part 1 (Max: 1 Pt)

For All Spaces:

The project submits a proposal that meets the following requirements:

- a. Positively impacts project occupants by supporting diversity, equity and inclusion of a marginalized population in a novel way not covered in the WELL Equity Rating.
- b. Substantiated by existing scientific, medical and/or industry research.
- c. Consistent with applicable laws and regulations as well as leading practices in organizational policies or building design and operations.

OR

At least one member of the project team meets the following requirements:

- a. Has achieved the [Reference](#).
- b. Maintains accreditation at least until the project's initial rating is achieved.

OR

The project meets at least one of the following requirements:

- a. The project is WELL Precertified. This strategy may be used for one Innovation feature.
- b. The project has achieved a WELL Rating. This strategy may be used for one Innovation feature.
- c. The project is WELL Certified. This strategy may be used for three Innovation features.

OR

The following requirements are met:

- a. The project achieves at least one of the following features:
 1. Feature EE1: Create DEI Assessment and Action Plan.
 2. Feature EE2: Incorporate Integrative Design.
- b. The project achieves any part in an optimization feature or entire precondition feature in the WELL Standard which is not already included in the WELL Equity Rating.
- c. The project team submits a narrative which describes how the information collected through the pursuit of Feature EE1 or EE2 informed their feature selection.

EI02 INNOVATION II | O (MAX: 1 PT)

Intent: Facilitate novel approaches to creating equitable, people-first places and celebrate leadership among projects.

Summary: As the scientific understanding of health equity continues to evolve, so too does the ability to address the complex issue of promoting health and well-being through built healthier spaces that go above and beyond WELL features.

Part 1 Part 1 (Max: 1 Pt)

For All Spaces:

The project submits a proposal that meets the following requirements:

- a. Positively impacts project occupants by supporting diversity, equity and inclusion of a marginalized population in a novel way not covered in the WELL Equity Rating.
- b. Substantiated by existing scientific, medical and/or industry research.
- c. Consistent with applicable laws and regulations as well as leading practices in organizational policies or building design and operations.

OR

The project meets at least one of the following requirements:

- a. Has achieved the [Reference](#).
- b. Maintains accreditation at least until the project's initial rating is achieved.

OR

The project meets at least one of the following requirements:

- a. The project is WELL Precertified. This strategy may be used for one Innovation feature.
- b. The project has achieved a WELL Rating. This strategy may be used for one Innovation feature.
- c. The project is WELL Certified. This strategy may be used for three Innovation features.

OR

The following requirements are met:

- a. The project achieves at least one of the following features:
 1. Feature EE1: Create DEI Assessment and Action Plan.
 2. Feature EE2: Incorporate Integrative Design.
- b. The project achieves any part in an optimization feature or entire precondition feature in the WELL Standard which is not already included in the WELL Equity Rating.
- c. The project team submits a narrative which describes how the information collected through the pursuit of Feature EE1 or EE2 informed their feature selection.

EI03 INNOVATION III | O (MAX: 1 PT)

Intent: Facilitate novel approaches to creating equitable, people-first places and celebrate leadership among projects.

Summary: As the scientific understanding of health equity continues to evolve, so too does the ability to address the complex issue of promoting health and well-being through built healthier spaces that go above and beyond WELL features.

Part 1 Part 1 (Max: 1 Pt)

For All Spaces:

The project submits a proposal that meets the following requirements:

- a. Positively impacts project occupants by supporting diversity, equity and inclusion of a marginalized population in a novel way not covered in the WELL Equity Rating.
- b. Substantiated by existing scientific, medical and/or industry research.
- c. Consistent with applicable laws and regulations as well as leading practices in organizational policies or building design and operations.

OR

At least one member of the project team meets the following requirements:

- a. Has achieved the [Reference](#).
- b. Maintains accreditation at least until the project's initial rating is achieved.

OR

The project meets at least one of the following requirements:

- a. The project is WELL Precertified. This strategy may be used for one Innovation feature.
- b. The project has achieved a WELL Rating. This strategy may be used for one Innovation feature.
- c. The project is WELL Certified. This strategy may be used for three Innovation features.

OR

The following requirements are met:

- a. The project achieves at least one of the following features:
 1. Feature EE1: Create DEI Assessment and Action Plan.
 2. Feature EE2: Incorporate Integrative Design.
- b. The project achieves any part in an optimization feature or entire precondition feature in the WELL Standard which is not already included in the WELL Equity Rating.
- c. The project team submits a narrative which describes how the information collected through the pursuit of Feature EE1 or EE2 informed their feature selection.

EI04 INNOVATION IV | O (MAX: 1 PT)

Intent: Facilitate novel approaches to creating equitable, people-first places and celebrate leadership among projects.

Summary: As the scientific understanding of health equity continues to evolve, so too does the ability to address the complex issue of promoting health and well-being through built healthier spaces that go above and beyond WELL features.

Part 1 Part 1 (Max: 1 Pt)

For All Spaces:

The project submits a proposal that meets the following requirements:

- a. Positively impacts project occupants by supporting diversity, equity and inclusion of a marginalized population in a novel way not covered in the WELL Equity Rating.
- b. Substantiated by existing scientific, medical and/or industry research.
- c. Consistent with applicable laws and regulations as well as leading practices in organizational policies or building design and operations.

OR

At least one member of the project team meets the following requirements:

- a. Has achieved the [Reference](#).
- b. Maintains accreditation at least until the project's initial rating is achieved.

OR

The project meets at least one of the following requirements:

- a. The project is WELL Precertified. This strategy may be used for one Innovation feature.
- b. The project has achieved a WELL Rating. This strategy may be used for one Innovation feature.
- c. The project is WELL Certified. This strategy may be used for three Innovation features.

OR

The following requirements are met:

- a. The project achieves at least one of the following features:
 1. Feature EE1: Create DEI Assessment and Action Plan.
 2. Feature EE2: Incorporate Integrative Design.
- b. The project achieves any part in an optimization feature or entire precondition feature in the WELL Standard which is not already included in the WELL Equity Rating.
- c. The project team submits a narrative which describes how the information collected through the pursuit of Feature EE1 or EE2 informed their feature selection.

EI05 INNOVATION V | O (MAX: 1 PT)

Intent: Facilitate novel approaches to creating equitable, people-first places and celebrate leadership among projects.

Summary: As the scientific understanding of health equity continues to evolve, so too does the ability to address the complex issue of promoting health and well-being through built healthier spaces that go above and beyond WELL features.

Part 1 Part 1 (Max: 1 Pt)

For All Spaces:

The project submits a proposal that meets the following requirements:

- a. Positively impacts project occupants by supporting diversity, equity and inclusion of a marginalized population in a novel way not covered in the WELL Equity Rating.
- b. Substantiated by existing scientific, medical and/or industry research.
- c. Consistent with applicable laws and regulations as well as leading practices in organizational policies or building design and operations.

OR

At least one member of the project team meets the following requirements:

- a. Has achieved the [Reference](#).
- b. Maintains accreditation at least until the project's initial rating is achieved.

OR

The project meets at least one of the following requirements:

- a. The project is WELL Precertified. This strategy may be used for one Innovation feature.
- b. The project has achieved a WELL Rating. This strategy may be used for one Innovation feature.
- c. The project is WELL Certified. This strategy may be used for three Innovation features.

OR

The following requirements are met:

- a. The project achieves at least one of the following features:
 1. Feature EE1: Create DEI Assessment and Action Plan.
 2. Feature EE2: Incorporate Integrative Design.
- b. The project achieves any part in an optimization feature or entire precondition feature in the WELL Standard which is not already included in the WELL Equity Rating.
- c. The project team submits a narrative which describes how the information collected through the pursuit of Feature EE1 or EE2 informed their feature selection.

EI06 GATEWAYS TO DEI | O (MAX: 5 PT)

Intent: Recognize projects that have taken meaningful steps toward deeper commitments to diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI).

Summary: WELL aligns with leading rating systems and programs that support equitable, people-first places. Various independent programs support similar and aligned goals of mair these programs in an effort to recognize their leadership and commitment to these issues.

Part 1 Part 1 (Max: 5 Pt)

For All Spaces:

The following requirements are met:

- a. The project or organization participates in an approved third-party certification or reporting program listed on [Reference](#).
- b. Results are made publicly available on-site and/or on the organization's website.

APPENDIX 1:

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